THURSDAY
December 12, 2024

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
18 Pages ₹ 6.00

THE HINDU

www.thehindu.com

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

https://newsth.live/fb
https://newsth.live/x
https://newsth.live/ig

RNI No. KARENG/1970/49945

Vol. 55 • No. 295

Printed at » Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirapalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Tirupati » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna

Unlock creativity and learning

with Intel® Core™ Ultra powered AI PCs

intel CORE ULTRA

- Real time AI personal assistance
- Create original art with text
- Play & pause videos with hand gestures
- Create new music with text

To avail the latest brand offers*, visit amazon.in | croma | Flipkart | Reliance digital | vijay sales www.vijaysales.com

Brand Name	acer	ASUS	DELL	hp	Lenovo	SAMSUNG
Model Name**	Swift 14 AI (35.56cm Display)	Zenbook 14 OLED (35.56cm Display)	Inspiron 7440 (35.56cm Display)	OmniBook Ultra Flip (35.6cm Display)	Yoga Slim 7 (35.5cm Display)	Galaxy Book4 Pro (35.56cm Display)

Scan to know more

*T&C apply. These brand offers are coming directly from the respective laptop brands. Intel is not liable for any of these Brand Offers and provides no guarantee or warranty on these. Please reach out to respective brands for more details.

**This advertisement contains references to third party devices identified by their model names, which is not a description of such device. The subject matter of the advertisement is Intel's platform, any other information in this advertisement is only ancillary and Intel does not claim any responsibility for the third party devices. The numbers mentioned in the table are in no way representative of the laptop features. These purely represent the laptop model name and/or pricing, as the case may be.

AI features may require software purchase, subscription or enablement by a software or platform provider, or may have specific configuration or compatibility requirements. Details at www.intel.com/PerformanceIndex. Results may vary.

© Intel Corporation. Intel, the Intel logo, and other Intel marks are trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries. Other names and brands may be claimed as the property of others.

THURSDAY
December 12, 2024

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
18 Pages ₹ 6.00

THE HINDU

www.thehindu.com

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

https://newsth.live/fb
https://newsth.live/x
https://newsth.live/ig

RNI No. KARENG/1970/49945

Vol. 55 • No. 295

Printed at » Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirapalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Tirupati » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna

ADDRESSING HAEMOPHILIA

Scientists develop gene therapy treatment

NEWS » PAGE 12

MISRI BRIEFS PANEL

'India does not endorse Hasina's statements'

NEWS » PAGE 10

TRUMP'S AGENDA

'Ukraine crisis bigger priority than West Asia'

WORLD » PAGE 14

U.K. BILL

The long and complex road to assisted dying

Issue linked to dignity, alleviation of suffering

EDITORIAL » PAGE 8

IT'S 6.5-6.5

Ding defends well as Game 13 ends in draw

SPORT » PAGE 15

NEARBY

Fees for MCA, MBA courses in govt. colleges up

BENGALURU
Several days after classes began, the government has announced a hike in fees for MBA and MCA courses in Government First Grade Colleges for 2024-25. » Page 2

Shakti scheme boosts bus ridership

BENGALURU
The Shakti scheme has led to a significant rise in public bus ridership. According to the Transport Department, the State-run transport corporations have recorded an average increase of 23.17 lakh passengers daily since the scheme's launch. » Page 3

Parliament sees chaos amid BJP-Cong. tussle

Lok Sabha sees disruptions over Congress leaders raising Manipur issue; both Houses witness BJP leaders accusing the Opposition party of association with American billionaire investor Soros

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha failed to function on Wednesday with uproar from Treasury and Opposition benches over the no-confidence notice against House Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar, while the Lok Sabha witnessed repeated adjournments and sparring despite getting off to a smooth start following a meeting between Speaker Om Birla and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi.

"I held a meeting with the Speaker and told him that derogatory comments against me should be expunged. The Speaker said he would look into it," Mr. Gandhi told presspersons after his morning meeting.

Taking a stand: Opposition members continue their protest in Parliament on Wednesday. ANI

However, the Lower House witnessed a ruckus in the afternoon when the Congress's Deputy Leader, Gaurav Gogoi, raised the issue of violence in Manipur and accused the government of using the "Soros" issue to hide its failures.

Hitting back, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal accused the Congress leadership of having links with U.S. billionaire investor George Soros-funded outfits that were allegedly working to destabilise India.

In the post-lunch session, Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia and Trinamool Congress MP Kalyan Banerjee got into a spat after the Trinamool leader made a personal remark against Mr. Scindia. Though Mr. Birla expunged the remark and Mr. Banerjee apologised, the Minister said, "I don't accept his apology".

Between repeated interruptions, the Lower House passed a Bill pertaining to the Railways.

In the Rajya Sabha, Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju defended the Chairman and criticised the Opposition for the notice, with Mr. Nadda too accusing the Congress of colluding with Mr. Soros to "destablise" the country.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10
A WIDE AISLE
» PAGE 8

Protect Places of Worship Act, say multiple pleas in SC

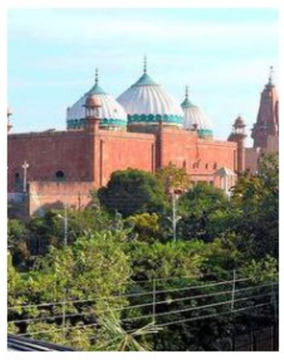
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Multiple parties moved the Supreme Court on the eve of a Special Bench hearing petitions challenging the validity of the Places of Worship Act, 1991, which preserves the character of religious places as they existed on August 15, 1947.

A three-judge Bench of the Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and Justices Sanjay Kumar and K.V. Viswanathan is set to hear the case at 2 p.m. on Thursday.

The Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), represented by advocate Haris Beeran, said that since the 1991 Act protected secularism – part of the Constitution's basic structure – even Parliament is prohibited from amending it.

The Shahi Eidgah mosque committee has also sought permission to intervene in the case, arguing that its results would impact claims that the mosque was situated on the Krishna Janmabhoomi.



The Shahi Eidgah mosque committee is also among the petitioners.

Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind filed a writ petition arguing that the filing of multifarious suits in local courts to "reclaim" temples destroyed by Muslim invaders in the 16th century was nothing but retrogression.

The Jamiat pointed out that the Ayodhya judgment of the apex court in November 2019, following which the suits mushroomed, had itself categorically upheld the 1991 Act and the essential feature of secular values it protected.

"The mere mentioning of the averment that the Muslim place of worship in question was built by Muslim invaders bars the suit under Section 4 of the 1991 Act which specifically provides the cut-off date of August 15, 1947 and preserves the religious character of a place of worship as it existed on that date. However, despite the clear mandate of law, the suits are being entertained," the petition said.

Motion planned to impeach U.P. High Court judge

NEW DELHI
The Opposition has started efforts to move an impeachment motion against Allahabad High Court judge Shekhar Kumar Yadav for his controversial statements at a recent Vishwa Hindu Parishad event. » PAGE 10

Rain check

Choppy sea: A boat navigates the rough waters off the coast of Pamban in Ramanathapuram district of Tamil Nadu on Wednesday. A low-pressure area over the Bay of Bengal is expected to bring intense rain to the delta districts of the State. L. BALACHANDAR

Krishna cremated with state honours

R. Krishna Kumar
SOMANAHALLI (MANDYA DIST.)

The former Chief Minister, S.M. Krishna, was cremated with state honours complete with gun salute at his ancestral village of Somanahalli in Maddur taluk of Mandya district, on Wednesday.

The body of Krishna, who died in Bengaluru on Tuesday, was brought to his native village by road. En route, a large number of people paid their last respects to the departed leader at Kengeri, Bidadi, Ramanagara, Channapatana etc., before the convoy with Krishna's coffin, reached Somanahalli for the last rites at 2.05 p.m.

A large number of political leaders, dignitaries, and well-wishers gathered to pay their final respects to Krishna, and they included Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, Home Minister G. Parameshwara, Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly R. Ashok, former Chief Ministers and BJP leaders B.S. Yediyurappa and Basavaraj Bommai, Union Ministers Pralhad Joshi and H.D. Kumaraswamy, and former Mandya MP Sumalatha.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah placing a wreath and paying his last respects to former Chief Minister S.M. Krishna at Somanahalli in Maddur taluk of Mandya district, on Wednesday. M.A. SRIRAM

As part of the state funeral the national anthem was played by the Police Band and a guard of honour was presented followed by a gun salute.

Mr. Siddaramaiah laid a wreath and offered his respects to Krishna, followed by other leaders.

Religious heads and seers of various mutts, including Nirmalanandanatha Swami of Adichunchanagiri Mutt, were also present.

The high representation of political leaders from the State, cutting across party lines, underscored the respect commanded by Krishna during whose tenure as Chief Minister from 1999 to 2004 saw the emergence of Bengaluru as a major hub for technology companies.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 3
RELATED REPORTS ON
» PAGE 4

Bidarathala, the 'village of bachelors' in State

Sathish G. T.
BIDARATHALA (CHIKKAMAGALURU DIST.)

Bidarathala, a secluded village perched on a hilltop near Kottigehara in Mudigere taluk, has earned the moniker "bachelors' village". Men face immense difficulty in finding brides, as parents are reluctant to marry their daughters into a place so isolated and devoid of basic amenities.

Despite being only 3 km from the Charmadi Ghat section of NH 73, Bidarathala is virtually inaccessible. The rugged road leading to the village is navigable only by four-wheel drive vehicles, and even walking the stretch is difficult.

Despite being only 3 km from the Charmadi Ghat section of NH 73, Bidarathala is virtually inaccessible. SATHISH G.T.

Life in isolation

The village is home to just ten families, all interrelated, who have lived there for decades. They collectively cultivate around nine acres of land, though their efforts yield little due to constant threats from wild elephants and gaurs.

Bidarathala has no power supply and has never had an anganwadi centre, let alone a school. The nearest school is in Kottigehara, 11 km away, and the absence of transport forces children to stay in hostels elsewhere if they wish to study.

"In our families, there are seven men aged between 25 and 43, all unmarried," says Nagesh B.R., a native who now runs a canteen in Kottigehara. "Our children are not getting marriage proposals because of the conditions in our village."

Seventy-year-old Meenakshamma, a long-time resident, hopes her son Girish will move away for better job opportunities and a chance to marry. "I've lived here for over 50 years. I wish at least my son leads a happy life somewhere else," she laments.

The villagers recount harrowing stories of losing loved ones due to the inability to reach a hospital in time.

Once, Bidarathala thrived with coffee, paddy, cardamom, and lemongrass cultivation. Lemongrass, in particular, brought prosperity, with farmers extracting up to 30 kg of oil every 45 days. However, eight years ago, cultivation stopped as wild elephants repeatedly destroyed the crops. The situation worsened in 2019 when heavy rains damaged houses.

Although the government has allotted sites for the villagers in Banakal, 15 km away, many are hesitant to leave due to their agricultural ties in Bidarathala. The residents have appealed to the district administration for a comprehensive rehabilitation package to help them rebuild their lives.

When *The Hindu* contacted Chikkamagaluru DC Meena Nagaraj, the officer said she would look into the issue.

BWSSB plans to supply treated water to Peenya Industrial Area

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In this first-of-its-kind project, the board will supply 4 MLD of treated water from its 40-MLD capacity STP at Nagasandra

The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) has proposed a first-of-its-kind project to provide treated sewage water to Peenya Industrial Area, the largest industrial hub of Asia, for its non-potable needs. The project, estimated to cost ₹27.5 crore, was cleared by the Board and submitted to the State government, sources said.

Under the proposed project, BWSSB will supply 4 million litres per day (MLD) of treated water from its 40 MLD capacity sewage treatment plant (STP) in Nagasandra, near Doddabidarakallu Lake. This STP is 4 km away from a BWSSB property in the Peenya Industrial Area.

"We have proposed to draw a line to the BWSSB premises from the STP, build a new water tank dedicated to treated water alone and supply this water from there to over 13,000 industrial units in the area. We will lay a supply line of over 25 km within the industrial area," said a senior BWSSB engineer, adding that the industry units have to get a dual piping system to effectively utilise treated water.

DPR submitted

During a drought-hit summer earlier this year, BWSSB championed the use of treated water for non-potable purposes, especially in the construction sector and in industries. "As part of these initiatives, the board brainstormed with the Peenya Industries Association, which has been hard-pressed for water for years now and came up with the idea of providing treated water from Nagasandra STP. The detailed project report was submitted to the State government," said V. Ram Prasath Manohar, Chairman of BWSSB.

The season that was — a breath of fresh air and challenge to monopoly

The 2024 F1 chapter could likely be important in the annals of the sport as there were several indications that there were contenders to Verstappen's throne; a look at the drivers who could become the next big thing in the sport

Leclerc. GETTY IMAGES

Russell. REUTERS

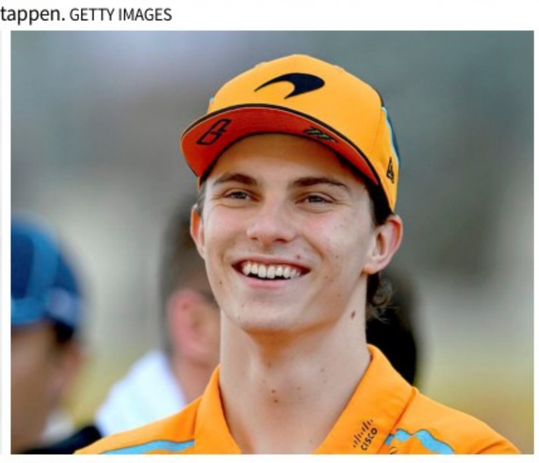
Sainz. GETTY IMAGES

Hamilton. GETTY IMAGES

Verstappen. GETTY IMAGES

Norris. GETTY IMAGES

Hulkenberg. REUTERS


Piastri. GETTY IMAGES

Tsunoda. GETTY IMAGES

Alonso. AFP

S. Dipak Ragav

The 2024 Formula One season was a refreshing change from the one-sided domination of Max Verstappen and Red Bull Racing in the previous year. The 75th running of the championship was far more exciting as seven drivers won a race and a few others in the midfield also impressed and produced incredible finishes. *The Hindu* ranks the top 10 drivers of the 2024 season.

● **Max Verstappen (2024 finish: 1st, 437 points):** In a sport where having the best car determines success than just having the fastest driver, Verstappen showed the difference a driver can make. While it might be a no-brainer to put the champion at the top of the rankings, who also won the most number of races (nine), the way he went about his season was far more impressive than the eventual result. The 27-year-old maximised his car's advantage when it was the class of the field, winning four out of the first five races. Once McLaren started to get its act together, Verstappen still won three more races where the former could have and should have won. The Dutchman and his team made the difference in executing the right strategy, and his excellent race craft helped him build a sizeable lead. Even when he went without a win for 10 races, Verstappen minimised the damage in a tricky car that he didn't particularly like but managed to bank crucial podiums that laid the foundation for his fourth straight drivers' crown. The icing on the cake was the victory in Brazil in treacherous conditions, where he pierced through the field from 17th on the grid to win the race and reaffirm his status as the best driver on the grid.

● **Charles Leclerc (3rd, 356):** This will probably go down as the Ferrari driver's best season since his debut in 2018. He won three races and scored 12 podiums to finish third in the championship despite the Prancing Horse going through a run of races during the summer with not-so-competitive machinery. The Monagasque driver won at two iconic venues, which were also the two most significant events for him and his team.

His first win of the year came in his home event of Monaco, the most glamorous race on the calendar. Then, after the summer break, Leclerc showed excellent tyre management skills to nick a win from McLaren's Oscar Piastri at Ferrari's home race in Monza. He closed the season strongly, winning in Austin, followed by podiums in Mexico, Qatar, and Abu Dhabi, finishing within 18 points of Lando Norris in second place.

Leclerc could claim to be the fastest driver over one lap, and this year, he has been clinical in races and reduced his mistakes, which has held him back in the past. Had Ferrari given him a competitive car from the mid-point of the year, it would not be wild to suggest he would have given Verstappen a lot more headache.

● **Lando Norris (2nd, 374):** In 2024, Norris realised his dream of becoming a Grand Prix winner and unexpectedly found himself in a title fight against Verstappen. The McLaren driver was brilliant over one lap and had spellbinding weekends, like in Zandvoort, Singapore and Abu Dhabi, where he posted dominant victories from pole position. He obliterated the field and lived up to his billing as an up-and-coming mega-star driver. However, at the same time, there were also major misses on his part despite having the fastest car for most of the season.

His errors and a bit of meekness at times made life easy for Verstappen, and the 25-year-old should have taken the title fight down to the wire. The fact that he converted only three of his eight pole positions to victories shows there is still work to do if he has to beat Verstappen. Even in wheel-to-wheel battle, Norris seemed timid against the Dutchman, who often pushes the boundaries of acceptable racecraft. The Briton needs to draw a line in the sand quickly and not let the four-time champion bully him on track.

● **Oscar Piastri (4th, 292):** The Australian took a massive leap in only his second year in the sport, winning two races. Significantly, he improved on his apparent weakness in his maiden season. In 2023, his race pace and tyre management were an issue; this year, Piastri has gotten on top of those. Once McLaren got its significant upgrades in Miami, Piastri wasn't far from Norris.

In fact, during a stretch of seven races in the middle of the year, he collected the most points and was crucial in McLaren winning the constructors' championship for the first time since 1998. At times, Piastri was too fast for McLaren's comfort, meaning he took points away from Norris when the latter was mounting his title challenge.

But there were weekends like Barcelona, Zandvoort, and Singapore where he struggled for pace compared to his teammate. While he was robust in battling other cars, he also got in some tangles later in the season and would want to address those. For 2025, Piastri will want to improve his qualifying record against his teammate to take the next step and not play second fiddle to his teammate as he had to do this year. But overall, he had a fine second year, and if he can show the same level of progress next year, he could be a force to reckon with.

● **George Russell (6th, 245):** For the second time in three years, Russell got the better of his illustrious teammate, Lewis Hamilton. Though both drivers won two races each, Russell generally had the upper hand, especially in qualifying (19-5). In fact, Hamilton's second win came courtesy of Russell's disqualification at the Belgian GP, where the latter had won an impressive one-stop strategy before his car was found to be underweight. However, Russell also had a few anonymous races and finished just 22 points ahead of Hamilton, who had mentally checked out after deciding to end his 12-year-stint at the team at the end of the year. Russell is now the clear team leader for Mercedes and needs to prove that he can be Hamilton's successor and guide the German giant back to winning ways.

● **Carlos Sainz (5th, 290):** The Spaniard had the most challenging job among the drivers in the top four teams. Before the start of the season, Sainz was out of a job after Ferrari hired Hamilton for his seat in 2025. It meant the 30-year-old was driving for his future and, considering the pressure, showed an excellent account of himself. His win in Australia, coming weeks after undergoing an appendix surgery, displayed his tenacity. When the Ferrari was unpredictable, Sainz showed great adaptability, but once the Scuderia became competitive, he fell short against Leclerc just a bit consistently.

● **Lewis Hamilton (7th, 223):** The seven-time champion started the season with a bombshell announcement that he would join Ferrari in 2025 which signalled that he had lost faith in Mercedes' ability to give him a car that could fight for the championship. Russell outperformed the 40-year-old at the start of the year, though the British legend came back strongly during the summer.

The highlight of his season came at his home track of Silverstone, where he took a record ninth British GP win. But post the summer break, the momentum swung back to Russell. Fans and Hamilton himself will hope for better days at Ferrari, which is on an upswing.

● **Nico Hulkenberg (11th, 41):** The German driver has long been considered to have failed to deliver on his potential. It hasn't helped that his raw speed has not always worked well in the Pirelli era, where there is more premium on being softer to the tyres than the ability to get every last tenth of the car. Once Renault (now Alpine) dropped him after 2019, it appeared his career was over. Though he did well as a stand-in during the Covid years, he has found a second wind at Haas. This year, he completely demolished his teammate Kevin Magnussen and almost helped Haas move up the table in the constructors'. He also was a bit unlucky in that he finished 11th, just outside the points six times. If not for Alpine's 2-3 finish at the Sau Paulo GP, Haas would have finished sixth in the championship. He will now race for Sauber in 2025 before it becomes the works Audi team in 2026, and the German driver will lead the iconic brand's F1 challenge.

● **Fernando Alonso (9th, 70):** The two-time champion had a miserable time in his second year at Aston Martin as the squad failed to build a decent car. At 43, the Spaniard showed he had not lost his speed by wringing consistent points finishes out of uncompetitive machinery, especially in the early part, by dragging his car into the top-10 in the first seven rounds. Last year, Aston fought for podiums consistently in the first half before trailing off towards the end, and that downward trend continued in 2024.

Still, if not for Alonso's heroic efforts, who contributed nearly 75% of the team's tally, the British outfit would not have finished fifth in the constructors' table.

● **Yuki Tsunoda (12th, 30):** The Japanese driver was saddled in a tricky car but continued to improve his stature in the sport through his impressive performances for the second year. Tsunoda comfortably saw off the challenge from Daniel Ricciardo, scoring points consistently and pretty much ended the latter's career.

Once Liam Lawson replaced Ricciardo, Tsunoda comfortably out-qualified the New Zealander and won their intra-team battle. But despite doing all he can, it is not clear yet that he will be considered for promotion to Red Bull Racing.

THE GIST

- While it might be a no-brainer to put Verstappen atop the rankings, the way he went about his season was far more impressive than the eventual result
- Had Ferrari given Leclerc a competitive car, at least from the middle of the year, he would have probably given the Dutchman a tougher time
- Norris had spellbinding weekends in Zandvoort, Singapore and Abu Dhabi and posted dominant victories from pole position. He was largely instrumental in McLaren regaining the Constructors' title after a long gap

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that, my client has entered into an agreement to purchase the Schedule property from its owner **SRI.G.MAYARAJ** S/o late Govinda, residing at: No.32/3, Shanimahatma Temple Street, R.K.Mutt layout, Next to Yallamma Temple, K.G. Nagar, Bengaluru – 560019.

Apart from the said owner, if any other person/s have any manner of claim or interest or demand over the Schedule property or any part thereof by way of sale, lease, mortgage, gift, lien, charge, trust, maintenance, easement, pre-emption or otherwise howsoever, they are hereby requested to file their objection/s (along with the photocopies of the documents on which they are relying), with the undersigned within 14 days from the date of publication of this notice. Objection/s received thereafter will not be binding on my client.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the residential property bearing Municipal No.64 (old No.194/1), PID No.49-7-64, measuring East to West 33ft and North to South 40ft, in all measuring 1320 Sq.ft., together with old structures thereon, situated at Dattareya Extension, 1st Main Road, K.G.Nagar, Bangaloreand bounded on:

East by : Property bearing No.65
West by : Property bearing No.63
North by : Property bearing No.66
South by : 2nd Cross Road, Dattareya Extension.

Sd/- **S.F. GOUTAM CHAND**
Advocate
GOUTAM ASSOCIATES
No.60, 2nd Floor, Kanakapura Road,
Basavanagudi, Bangalore-560 004.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My clients Smt. Subbalakshmamma W/o. Late. Nyana Chari and her son B. N. Jagadish Kumar have intend to purchase of the schedule property mentioned hereunder for a valuable consideration with its owner Sri. Suresh H. N. @ Suresh Kumar H. N. S/o. Sri. H. P. Nagappa, Residing at No. # 1806, 24th Main, 25th B Cross, 2nd Sector, HSR Layout, Bangalore- 560 102.

If any persons, banks, financial institutions etc., having any claims, right, title and interest whatsoever over the schedule property may forward their objections to the undersigned in writing with supporting documents of your such claims, within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which it will be deemed that there are no claims, right, title and interest by anybody and my client will proceed for completion of sale transaction and thereafter no claims will be considered.

SCHEDULE

Residential Plot bearing No.77, Haragadde Grama Panchyathi khatha No. 79/77, Property PID No. 150200102800221761, measuring East to West 9.15 Mrts. and North to South 12.19 Mrts. totally measuring 111.48 Sq. Mtrs. in the layout Know as "BRINDA CITY", formed in converted land bearing Sy. No. 54 as per approval No. APA/LAO/109/2017-18 dated 02-11-2023, situated at Dyavasandra Village, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District and bounded on the : East by : Road, West by :Plot No. 91, North by : Plot No. 76, South by : Plot No. 78.

MANJUNATHA & ASSOCIATES
K. N. MANJUNATHA CHARY,
ROOPA. B, Advocates,
 # 96, 1st Floor, 1st Main, 4th Cross, Maruthi Nagar, Madiwala, Bangalore- 68, Mob: 9845965626, 7406090832
Bangalore, Date : 11-12-2024

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI)

(Setup by an Act of Parliament)

Tirupati Branch of SIRC of ICAI

HO: ICAI Bhawan, Indraprastha Marg, New Delhi – 110002

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) invites sealed unconditional Tender in two bid System (Technical & Financial Bid in two separate envelopes) in prescribed format, from eligible, experienced, and reputed Contractors in respect of **Construction of Institutional Building at Survey No. C-19 in 195/1 Seshachalam Hill View Layout Phase-1, Chennaiahgunta Village, Tirumala Nagar Grama Panchayat, Tirupati Urban Mandal, Tirupati District, Andhra Pradesh.**

The last date for receipt of duly filled in sealed bids is **03.01.2025 upto 5 PM.** The detailed terms and conditions along with Tender document are available at ICAI's website **www.icai.org/post/icai-eoi-tenders & www.sirc-icai.org**

SECRETARY, ICAI

READ

FRONTLINE
LEADING THE DEBATE SINCE 1984

EVERY FORTNIGHT.

TO SUBSCRIBE, VISIT
www.thehindugroup.in/subscribe

बैंक ऑफ़ बड़ौदा Bank of Baroda — Maninagar (West) Branch

Maninagar Cross Roads, Maninagar, Ahmedabad-380008.
Phone- (079)-25451924, 25462740, 25463750,
E-Mail - dbmanw@bankofbaroda.com

CORRIGENDUM

This is with reference to the Possession Notice published in this newspaper on 11.12.2024, it is clarified that in Account of M/s. Unique Intertrade Private Limited, **Property No.1 & 2, Date of Possession is 09.12.2024 & Property No.3, Date of Possession is 10.12.2024.** Other details of Possession will remain same.

Date : 11.12.2024 Sd/- Authorised Officer
Place: Bengaluru Bank of Baroda

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER
(Only Through KPP-Portal)

BWSSB invites tenders from registered agencies for the following works:

Office of the Chief Engineer (WWM-West), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bangalore-560009.

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount Put to Tender / EMD Amount	Last date & Time for submission of tender	Date and time for opening of tender
1	(WWM-STP) V.Valley	BWSSB/EE(WWM-STP)V.Valley/PB/409/2024-25 Date: 02.12.2024	₹ 56,15,049/- / ₹ 1,13,300/-	27.12.2024 upto 5:30 pm	30.12.2024 after 4:00 pm
			Sd/- Executive Engineer (WWM-STP) V.Valley		
2	(WWM-N) V.Valley	BWSSB/EE(WWM-N-V.V)/PB/1034/2024-25 Date: 09.12.2024	₹ 31.22 Lakhs / ₹ 62,500/-	19.12.2024 upto 4:00 pm	21.12.2024 at 4:00 pm
			Sd/- Executive Engineer (WWM-N) V.Valley		

Office of the Chief Engineer (Design & QA), 9th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bangalore-560009.

3	DE&PS	BWSSB/EDEPSTE/AE/741/2024-25 Date: 04.12.2024	₹ 98,71,751/- / ₹ 1,97,500/-	27.12.2024 upto 11:00 am	28.12.2024 after 11:15 am
4		BWSSB/EDEPSTE/AE/742/2024-25 Date: 04.12.2024	₹ 96,62,270/- / ₹ 1,93,300/-		
			Sd/- Executive Engineer (DE&PS)		

Office of the Chief Engineer (West), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bangalore-560009.

5	North West -2	BWSSB/EENW-2/TO/PB/4172/2024-25 Date: 10.12.2024	₹ 26,11,667/- / ₹ 52,300/-	26.12.2024 upto 4:00 pm	27.12.2024 after 4:30 pm
			Sd/- Executive Engineer (North West-2)		

The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/MIA/3719/2024-25

THE HINDU GROUP

THE HINDU
REWIND 2024
TRIVIA QUIZ

DAY 12

1. In which state was a 125-foot-high bronze statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar inaugurated in January 2024?
2. In 2024, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) launched India's first around-the-clock grain dispensing machine, or 'Grain ATM,' in which Indian state?
3. India's first X Museum was inaugurated at O.P. Jindal Global University and is designed to provide an immersive exploration of key provisions to help citizens understand the ideals that have shaped the nation. Identify X.

*T&C apply.

Scan QR code or visit **newsth.live/RTQPA** take the quiz. Top 3 winners* every day win gift vouchers.

Answer to yesterday's quiz:
1. Jyoti Ratre
2. All We Imagine As Light
3. Kozhikode

Yesterday's Winners:
1. Sidharth M Joy, Trivandrum | 2. Kaniyan. P, Chennai | 3. Shyam. B, Bengaluru

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

Chennai Division (Mechanical Branch)
E-Tender Notice No. M_M_QWS_AUG_TBM Dt : 09.12.2024

Divisional Railway Manager / Mechanical Branch / Chennai Division, Chennai - 600 003 for and on behalf of the President of India invites **ONLINE** tenders for the following work as per tender notice given in the e-tender Portal **www.ireps.gov.in.** The tenderer(s) / contractor(s) intending to apply for e-tender for Mechanical works in Chennai division, need to get enrolled in the e-tender portal **www.ireps.gov.in** and only online tenders will be accepted.

1.	Description	**Augmentation for Quick watering arrangements at TBM station.**
2.	Location	**TAMBARAM**
3.	Advertised tender value in	**Rs. 1,36,49,632.30/-**
4.	Earnest Money Deposit in	**Rs. 2,18,300/-**
5.	Similar Nature of work	**Applicable**
6.	Period of completion in months	**180 Days.**

Tender closing date and time : 31.12.2024 @ 12.00 hrs. Details of value of tender, EMD are given in e-portal **www.ireps.gov.in.** For details bid submission please refer to web portal **www.ireps.gov.in**

Divisional Railway Manager, (Mechanical),
Chennai Division, Southern Railway, Chennai - 600 003

SOUTH INDIAN Bank

The South Indian Bank Ltd.
Malleshwaram Branch
No. 31/1, 7th Cross, Sampige Road, Malleshwaram, Bangalore - 560003
Ph.: 080-23348404

Date: 12.12.2024

NOTICE OF GOLD LOAN AUCTION

The Gold Articles pledged under the following gold loan account numbers at bank's branch Malleshwaram which are not cleared by payment of Bank's dues even after serving registered notice and gold articles pledged under same account numbers against which registered notice have been served / returned undelivered, will be sold in public auction or by private treaty on as is where is condition at Malleshwaram Branch premises as under or any other convenient date and time without further notice at the risk and responsibility of the pawners, if they are not released / renewed from the branch. Auction of gold ornaments pledged under the following accounts will be held at **MALLESHWARAM BRANCH** Bangalore on **23.12.2024** at South Indian Bank Ltd., Malleshwaram, Bangalore at **3:30 p.m.**

Sl. No.	Name of the Account Holder	Account Number	Gross Weight
01	JYOTHI PRAKASH	0279.653.77845	51.00
02	SUHAIL AHAMMED	0279.653.78689	30.50
03	GAAYATRIE KHURRANA	0279.653.78744	224.00
04	NIKHIL PRAKASH	0279.653.78279	100.00
05	NIKHIL PRAKASH	0279.653.78869	46.50

Bank reserves right to adjourn / cancel auction at any point of time.

Branch Manager
SIB - Malleshwaram

CORPORATE & REGD. OFFICE:
SIB Towers, T.B. Road, Mission Quarters, Thrissur, Kerala - 680 001
Ph: +91 487 2420020; Fax : +91 487 2420020
E-mail: sibcorporate@sib.co.in; Website : www.southindianbank.com

CLASSIFIEDS MART

TO ADVERTISE VISIT
www.thehinduads.com
CALL: Bengaluru: 98455 29981 ▪ 080-22071826
Mangaluru: 0824-2417575 ▪ 2417580
Hubballi: 0836-2338600 ▪ 2335700

EDUCATIONAL

GENERAL

ANTHRO MEANS VAID SIR

Batch Starts: Dec 15 | Admissions Open
250+ ANSWERS PREPARED & EVALUATED
TEST SERIES INCLUDED WITH COURES

All 37 of Vaids Students
Who Are Facing Interview
Must Contact Immediately for
Mock Interview Sessions

For Details visit www.vaidsics.com
Or Youtube.com/@VaidsICSDelhi | Ph: 9999946748

ATTENTION !! CLASS 10th & 11th STUDENTS
Study 5 Years LAW Degree From
NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITIES
CLAT
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM 2025 – 26
FREE COACHING FOR 100 STUDENTS*

Apply Now
LPSAT
Law Prep Scholarship Admission Test
Date : 15th Dec 2024
Eligibility : 10th & 11th Studying Students
Time : 2 – 3 PM
Location : Bangalore

Limited Seats...
Registration Closes On 10th December
+91 97423 76459
OUR BENGALURU CENTERS
JAYANAGAR | VIJAYANAGAR | MALLESHWARAM
LAW PREP Tutorial
Scan to Apply
www.lawpreptutorial.com
Registration Fees : INR 49

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, ANITHA Makana, R/a No.219/220, 11th Cross, Wilson Garden, Bangalore-560027 have changed my name to Anitha Gyanender Kumar Makana vide affidavit dt: 07.12.2024 sworn before Notary K.V.Mani, B'luru.

I Danush Ligam S/O, N. Thirumalai R/o #13, 3rd Block, 4th Street, Near Logos Retreat Centre, Prakruthi Township, Babusapalya Kalyannagar Post, Bangalore - 560043 have changed my name to T. Danushlingam.

I, JOTHY Abbiah Reddy, R/a No.386, 4th Cross, 11th Main, 5th Sector, HSR Layout, Bangalore-560102 have changed my name to Jyothi Janardhan Reddy vide affidavit dt: 07.12.2024 sworn before Notary K.V.Mani, B'luru.

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE I ADDL CITY CIVIL & SESSION JUDGE AT BENGALURU (CCH-02)

ORIGINAL SUIT NO. 6679 OF 2022

BETWEEN:
ICICI Bank Ltd,
A body corporate incorporated And registered under the Indian Companies Act 1956 and licensed As a Bank under the Banking Regulation Act 1949 having Registered Office at: "Landmark", Race Course Circle, Vadodara - 390007 And having its Regional office at ICICI Bank Ltd., 11th Floor, C-Wing, Mittal Tower, M.G. Road, Bengaluru- 560001. And represented by its POA Holder, Mr. M Rohit Ali, S/o Ishrath Ali M, Aged about 25 years, ...PLAINTIFF

AND:
Mr. K.M. Mohan Kumar,
S/o Munibhirappa, Aged about 42 years,
R/a 00 6/2, Modaliar Street, Netkallappa Circle, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru-560004. ...DEFENDANT

Summons/Notice through Paper Publication

Mr. K.M. Mohan Kumar,
S/o Munibhirappa,
Aged about 42 years,
R/a 00 6/2, Modaliar Street, Netkallappa Circle, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru-560004. ...DEFENDANT

WHEREAS the above named Plaintiff has instituted case against you for recovery loan amount Rs. 2,75,674/- together with interest at the rate 18% p.a. from date of due to till the date of realization.
You are hereby summoned to appear before this Hon'ble i Addl City Civil & Session Judge Court, (CCH-02), At Bengaluru, in person or by a Advocate/Pleader on 10.01.2025 at 11:00 A.M to answer the questions of the same. Failing which the matter will be heard and determined as "EX-PARTE".
Given under my hand and seal of the Court on this 6th day of December 2024.

By the order of the Court
City Civil Court Bengaluru
Advocate for Plaintiff
Mr. K.N. Arvinda Navada
Advocate
No.177/1, (88), 1st Floor, Besides 12th cross, Cubbonpet Main Road, Bengaluru- 560002

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE HONOURABLE III ADDITIONAL JUNIOR CIVIL JUDGE:: KADAPA
I.A.No. 87/2024 in O.S.No.505/2017

Kakarla Ramanjineyulu
... Petitioner/ Plaintiff
Vs.
R3/D3: Buddi Usha Having died her legal heirs No.7 to 11.
R8: B.Veenavani, W/o. B.Partha saradhi D/o. Late B.Usha Rani, Hindu, aged about 44 years, Resident of Plot No.18, Lakshmi Street, 1st Main, 7th Plase, JP nagar, Kothnoor Road, Bangalore - 560078, Karnataka State.
R10: B.Vandana W/o. A.Kranthi Vikram, D/o. Late B.Usha Rani, Hindu, aged about 41 years resident of H.No.2/711, Dwaraka Nagar, 8th Main, 5th Stage, BEML Layout, Rajarajeswari Nagar, Bangalore- 560098
...Respondents / Proposed Defendants No.8 & 10

NOTICE TO RESPONDENT NO.8 & 10

That the above petitioner / Plaintiff has filed above said petition against you to condone delay in filing petition to implead you as legal heir of deceased Defendant No.3 and said I.A.is posted to 24.12.2024 for your appearance. Therefore you have to appear before the Hon'ble III Additional Junior Civil Judge Court, Kadapa on 24.12.2024 at 10.30 AM either personally or through counsel and raise your objections if any, otherwise the case will be heard and decided in your absence.

//BY THE ORDER OF THE COURT//
T.SUBRAMANYAM,
Advocate,
D.No.1/380-3, maruthi Nagar, Kadapa, A.P. India- 516001

IN THE COURT OF THE HONOURABLE III ADDITIONAL JUNIOR CIVIL JUDGE:: KADAPA
I.A.No. 86/2024 in O.S.No.505/2017

Kakarla Ramanjineyulu
... Petitioner/ Plaintiff
Vs.
R3/D3: Buddi Usha Having died her legal heirs No.7 to 11.
R8: B.Veenavani, W/o. B.Partha saradhi D/o. Late B.Usha Rani, Hindu, aged about 44 years, Resident of Plot No.18, Lakshmi Street, 1st Main, 7th Plase, JP nagar, Kothnoor Road, Bangalore - 560078, Karnataka State.
R10: B.Vandana W/o. A.Kranthi Vikram, D/o. Late B.Usha Rani, Hindu, aged about 41 years resident of H.No.2/711, Dwaraka Nagar, 8th Main, 5th Stage, BEML Layout, Rajarajeswari Nagar, Bangalore- 560098
...Respondents / Proposed Defendants No.8 & 10

NOTICE TO RESPONDENT NO.8 & 10

That the above petitioner / Plaintiff has filed above said petition to implead you as legal heir of deceased Defendant No.3 and said I.A.is posted to 24.12.2024 for your appearance. Therefore you have to appear before the Hon'ble III Additional Junior Civil Judge Court, Kadapa on 24.12.2024 at 10.30 AM either personally or through counsel and raise your objections if any, other wise the case will be heard and decided in your absence.

//BY THE ORDER OF THE COURT//
T.SUBRAMANYAM,
Advocate,
D.No.1/380-3, maruthi Nagar, Kadapa, A.P. India- 516001

Your feedback will keep us Cleaner, Sharper and Bolder

Call our toll-free number
1800 102 1878
Or write to us at
customercare@thehindu.co.in

Scan the QR code to register your feedback

THE HINDU | thehindu businessline | FRONTLINE | SPORTSTAR | The Hindu Young World | THE HINDU

To advertise for
Public Notice I Tenders I All Bank Notices (SARFESI), Securitization I Financial Results I Company Notice I AGM Notice
Kindly contact
S. Someshwara - 9342873170 I D Jason - 9620207330
Basavaraj - 9448364925
mail your enquiry to
someshwara.s@thehindu.co.in I jason.d@thehindu.co.in
basavaraju.c@thehindu.co.in
THE HINDU

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank
(A Government of India Undertaking)
Head Office: Bangalore

E-Auction Sale of Properties on 31.12.2024

Last date of EMD : 30.12.2024

ARM-1 Branch, 2nd Floor, No.86, Spencers Tower, M.G. Road, Bangalore-560001. Ph: 08025310066. E-mail: cb2366@canarabank.com

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described Immovable properties mortgaged/ charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **ARM-1 Branch, Bengaluru of the Canara Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 31.12.2024 (10.30 AM to 11.00 AM)** through E-Auction underthe Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002
For details with regard to E-Auction & digital signature please contact the service provider **M/s PSB Alliance (https://baanknet.com) e-mail: support.ebkray@psballiance.com, Helpdesk Number : 8291220220, Website: https://baanknet.com .**
The Earnest Money shall be Deposited by way of E-Wallet of **M/s PSB Alliance Private Limited (https://baanknet.com/)** portal directly or by generating the Challan therein to deposit the EMD through RTGS/NEFT in the account details as mentioned in the said challan **on or before 30.12.2024, 5.00 pm** **(₹. in lakhs)**

Lot No	Name & Address of the Borrower / Guarantor / Mortgagor	Description of the movable / immovable assets:	Total Dues Type of Possession	a. Reserve Price b. EMD c. Incremental Bid	Inspection date & time
1	**(1) Shri Sendhil Elumalai** S/o Elumulai Govindaraj, # 10, O 2nd Street, Near Shree Complex, Shivan Chetty Gardens, Bangalore-560042. **(2) Shri Bhaskar M,** No.1534, 39th Cross, 4th Block, Jayanagar Bengaluru-560041.	Flat No.F-402 3rd floor F block, Sy No.108/3, 108/2, Measuring super built up area of 1089 Sqft along with 400 Sqft of undivided interest in land at Garden Residency Apartment, Bommasandra, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore 560099. Boundries: North: open to sky of the apartment building, South: Common corridor, East: open to sky of the apartment building, West: Residential apartment privately numbered as F-401. **Coordinates of the property: Latitude-**12.8053267N, **Longitude-** 77.6770091.	**Rs. 51661898.49 as on 09.12.2024 with further interest and cost thereon. Physical Possession**	a) 56.46 b) 5.64 c) 1.00	24.12.2024 10.00 AM to 2.00 PM. with Prior Appointment with Authorised Officer
		Flat No. F-403 3rd floor F block, Sy No.108/3, 108/2, Measuring super built up area of 1089 Sqft along with 400 Sqft of undivided interest in land at Garden Residency Apartment, Bommasandra, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore 560099. Boundries: North: common corridor, South: open to sky of the apartment building, East: open to sky of the apartment building, West: Residential apartment privately numbered as F-404. **Coordinates of the property: Latitude-**12.8053267N, **Longitude-**77.6770091.		a) 56.46 b) 5.64 c) 1.00	
		Flat No. F-404 3rd floor F block, Sy No.108/3, 108/2, Measuring super built up area of 1089 Sqft along with 400 Sqft of undivided interest in land at Garden Residency Apartment, Bommasandra, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore 560099. Boundries: North: common corridor, South: open to sky of the apartment building, East: Residential apartment privately numbered as F-403, West: Lift area. **Coordinates of the property: Latitude-** 12.8053267N, **Longitude-** 77.6770091.		a) 56.46 b) 5.64 c) 1.00	
		Residential Villa old: property bearing Sy No.119/2 panchayat khatha 92/180 S Medahalli village Sarjapur Hobli Anekal Taluk Bangalore. New: Property bearing Villa No.180/6A Sarjapur Athipalli cross road Sarjapur Bangalore 562124, Extent 3841.66 Sqft. Boundries: North-Road, South- property bearing Sy No.117, East-property bearing Sy No.119/1, West- property bearing Sy No.119/3. **Coordinates of the property, Latitude-** 12.834639, **Longitude-** 77.780889.		a) 315.93 b) 31.59 c) 1.00	
2	**(1) M/s. Bangalore Tiles India Pvt. ltd.,** No.13/09/10, 2nd Stage, 5th Cross, okalipuram Bengaluru, Karnataka-560021. **(2) Mr Sunil Gandhi,** No.35/1 Ranka Nest Appartment Flat No.231 3rd Floor Okalipuram Bangalore-560021. **(3) Mr Rajesh Gandhi,** No.35/1 Ranka Nest Appartment, Flat No.231, 3rd Floor, Okalipuram Bangalore 560021.	Commercial Land and Building Constructed as basement + GF + FF + SF + terrace floor, Corporation Property No.13/9/10, BBMP No.13/9-10 Labour Quarter No.18,HSMI Estate 2nd Stage, 5th Cross, Okalipuram, BBMP Ward No.21, Bangalore-560021. Total Extent of the Plot 2528 Sq.ft. Bounded: East by: Hansha Shah's Property, West by : Maithri Plastics, North by: Dinesh Kothari's Property, South by: Road. **Coordinates of the property: Latitude-** 12.984452, **Longitude-** 77.566663	**Rs. 49536933.01 as on 09.12.2024 with further interest and cost thereon. Symbolic possession**	a) 309.65 b) 30.965 c) 1.00	24.12.2024 10.00 AM to 2.00 PM. with Prior Appointment with Authorised Officer

Known encumbrances, if any: Not to the knowledge of the Bank.
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link "E-Auction" provided in Canara Bank's website **(www.canarabank.com)** or **https://baanknet.com** may contact **Chief Manager, ARM-1 Branch, Bengaluru, Canara Bank, Ph. No.08025310066, 9627872626, 7483935007,9538406090 and 9598559920** during office hours on any working day.

Place: Bangalore
Date : 11.12.2024

Sd/-
Authorised Officer, Canara Bank

Fees for MCA, MBA courses in govt. first grade colleges hiked after classes begin

Owing to COVID-19 pandemic, the State government had not revised the fees since 2020

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

Several days after classes began, the State government has announced a hike in fees for MBA and MCA courses in Government First Grade Colleges for the academic year 2024-25.

The State government revised the fees and issued an order on November 7, 2024. The Department of Collegiate Education (DCE) recently published the order on its website, leaving students and college administrations confused about paying additional fees.

Students have expressed objection to the government's move to increase fees only for courses in Government First Grade Colleges under the jurisdiction of DCE, without increasing the fees for MCA and MBA courses in engineering colleges under the jurisdiction of the Department of Technical Education this year.

The State government started MBA and MCA postgraduate degree courses in many Government First Grade Colleges with necessary infrastructure and high student enrolment. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the State government had not revised the fees since 2020 and the fees of previous years were continued in 2023-24.

Apart from other fees, including examination fees

College students outside the Government First Grade College at Malleswaram. FILE PHOTO

fixed by the universities, the DCE fixed a total fee of ₹2,850, including application fee, admission fee, tuition fee, postgraduate department development fee, and others. In addition, the fee of ₹20,000 was continued for general category students pursuing MBA courses as in previous years.

The Commissioner of the Department of Collegiate Education had submitted a proposal to the State government for revision of fees of MBA and MCA courses in Government First Grade Colleges for the year 2024-25. The government, which accepted this request, issued an order increasing the fees. As per the government order, excluding the examination fee and other university fees, the department has fixed it at ₹5,135.

In addition, for the first time, an additional fee of ₹3,000 has been charged for the MSc (Computer Science, Microbiology, Biotechnology and Information Science) course, ₹6,000 for MCA, and ₹1,000 for MBA (Computer Science and Computer Applications) course in the name of users' fee.

As a result, this year, students pursuing MBA and MCA courses in government degree colleges will have to pay fees ranging from ₹6,135 to ₹11,135, excluding the university fee.

"I have paid the fees fixed by the government and I am attending classes. The government has now revised the fees by a huge amount. We cannot afford to pay this. Even the college has not said anything about this so far. I am very confused," said a student, who joined for the MCA course this year in a Government First Grade College in Bengaluru.

"The government recently issued the revised fee order. We collected the old fees from students and gave admission. The government has not informed anything about the collection of additional fees," said the principal of a Government First Grade College.

Proposal awaited

Both the Department of Technical Education and the Department of Collegiate Education come under the Department of Higher Education. This year, the Technical Education Department submitted the proposal to the government to revise the fees of MCA and MBA courses in engineering colleges. However, the government rejected the proposal and continued the fees of last year.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Apoorva, member leader of AIDSO, a student organisation, said: "Most of the students are from poor families. It is condemnable that the government has increased the fees. The government should immediately withdraw the fee revision order. Otherwise, a protest will be launched."

Responding to the controversy, M.C. Sudhakar, Minister for Higher Education, said: ""I don't know on what basis the fees have been revised. Appropriate action will be taken to ensure that students are not burdened by this."

Guest faculty of govt. PU colleges and schools to launch 'Belagavi Chalo' protest on Dec. 17 and 18

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

Guest faculties working in government PU colleges, government primary and high schools will hold 'Belagavi Chalo' protest on December 17 and 18 demanding hike of ₹30,000 in monthly remuneration, job security, and other benefits.

Guest lecturers of PU colleges have decided to boycott classes and hold protest rallies at Belagavi, where the legislature session is under way, on December 17 under the Government Pre-university Colleges Guest Lecturers' Association. On December 18, guest teachers of primary and high schools will hold protest under the Karnataka State Government Primary and High School Guest Teachers' Association.

Monthly remuneration

There are about 48,000 government primary and high schools across the State and against the vacancies of teacher posts, about 43,000 guest teachers were recruited for the academic year 2024-25.

A monthly remuneration of ₹10,000 is being given to primary school guest teachers and ₹10,500 to high school guest teachers.

There are a total of 1,232 government PU colleges across the State, and 4,689 guest lecturers are working here. They are being given a monthly remuneration of ₹12,000.

Guest lecturers of PU colleges will boycott classes and hold protest rallies at Belagavi, where the legislature session is under way

"As per the government rules, all guest lecturers are MA-B.Ed, MSc-B.Ed, or M.Com-B.Ed graduates and they are getting only ₹12,000 per month as remuneration. Due to the shortage of lecturers, they teach for about 20 hours a week, exceeding the government rules. The government should immediately increase the remuneration of guest lecturers in PU colleges to ₹30,000 per month," demanded Rajesh Bhat, State secretary, Government Pre-university Colleges Guest Lecturers' Association.

Earlier, during the BJP government, guest lecturers working in Government First Grade Colleges went on indefinite strike demanding increase in remuneration. In 2022, the State government increased their remuneration in the range between ₹26,000 and ₹32,000 per month.

At the same time, it ordered increase in the remuneration of government primary school guest teachers from ₹7,500 to ₹10,000, the remuneration of high school guest teachers from ₹8,000 to ₹10,500, and remuneration of guest lecturers in PU colleges from ₹9,000 to ₹12,000 per month.

However, in December 2023, guest lecturers of Government First Grade Colleges launched another indefinite strike demanding remuneration hike and fulfilment of other demands. At this time, the government decided to increase remuneration by ₹5,000. But, the protesters did not agree to this and continued the protest.

Then on January 7, 2024, the government announced an increase in remuneration from ₹5,000 to ₹8,000 for guest lecturers of degree colleges based on experience and a lump sum amount of ₹5 lakh as retirement benefit, and other benefits.

Ignored section

However, despite several requests for the past one year, it has ignored the demand for increase in remuneration for guest lecturers in PU colleges and guest teachers in primary and high schools in the State.

"As per the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission, the government is paying remuneration of ₹10,000 and ₹10,500 for the guest teachers of primary and high schools. However, all State government employees are already being paid as per the recommendations of the Seventh Pay Commission," said Chitralekha, State president, Karnataka State Government Primary and High School Guest Teachers' Association.

Techie suicide: Police team leaves for U.P.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A special team from the Marathahalli police station was dispatched to Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday to investigate the suicide case of a 34-year-old deputy general manager of a tech company at his apartment on Monday morning.

Shivakumar Gunare, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Whitefield), said that based on the complaint filed by the deceased's brother, the wife of the deceased and her family members have been booked under abetment to suicide.

The complainant has alleged that the accused had filed multiple cases against him and family members and demanded money which led him to take the extreme step.

Atul Subhash from Uttar Pradesh was found dead at his apartment in Munnekollala on Monday. Subhash left behind a 40-page note and a video explaining his decision and detailing the allegations. A four page handwritten death note has been recovered from the apartment and taken for investigation.

The FIR charges Nikita Singhania, wife of the deceased, mother-in-law Nisha Singhania, brother-in-law Anuragh Singhania, and relative Sushil Singhania for allegedly seeking ₹3 crore to settle cases and humiliating, harassing, and forcing him to take the extreme step.

(Those having suicidal tendencies can call arogya sahayavani Ph. 104 for help)

Man arrested for selling milk powder meant for schoolchildren

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD/BENGALURU

A person allegedly selling illegally procured, adulterated and expired 'Nandini Milk Powder' in Hyderabad was arrested by the officials from the Central Zone Task Force along with Musheerabad police on Tuesday.

The accused, identified as 46-year-old Chittaboina Damodar, is a resident of Bholakpur, Secunderabad. Following a tip-off, the officials raided his godown in Musheerabad from where 780 kg of milk powder - 330 kg in 11 bags and 450 kg in 18 packets - was seized.

The accused was illegally transporting, storing and selling adulterated/expired Nandini milk powder meant for schoolchildren under 'Ksheera Bhagya Yojana' introduced by the Karnataka government.

Investigation revealed that Damodar was sourcing the milk powder from Ravi, a native of Karnataka, for ₹180 per kg and selling

The accused with the illegally procured, adulterated and expired Nandini milk powder.

it for ₹240 per kg to customers in Hyderabad.

In fact, the accused was earlier arrested for similar offences and was handed over to the food safety officials for further action.

A case was booked and efforts are under way to nab Ravi.

Probe on

The Karnataka government's Department of School Education and Literacy said it views this case seriously and has sought a report from the Hyderabad police. Department of Public Instruction Commissioner Trilokchandra told *The Hindu*: "We have asked for the batch number that is mentioned on the milk powder packet. It will be known from which district it was bought and to which schools the milk powder was supplied. Our department will also conduct an investigation. Legal action will be taken against those involved in the case."

Four students from Kolar die

The Hindu Bureau
HUBBALLI

The bodies of four 15-year-old girls from Morarji Desai Residential School in Kolar district who were on an excursion have been recovered from the sea near Murdeshwar in Bhatkal taluk of Uttara Kannada.

While the body of Shravanti Gopalappa was recovered on Tuesday, the bodies of Deeksha J., Lavanya and Vandana were recovered on Wednesday.

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E - TENDER NOTICE

DRM / TRD, North Western Railway, Jodhpur for & on behalf of the president of India, invites E-tender for the following work. **Tender No.: 16-TRD-JU-E-TENDER-24-25R2, Date: 11.12.2024. Name of Work**: Electrical TRD work in c/w SMR-MBF STD III EI Work (15 stations). **Approx. Cost of the work**: ₹ 66415667.50. Complete details of tenders can be seen on Website **www.ireps.gov.in Date & time of closing of e-tender**: 06.01.2025 up to 15:00 hrs. **Date & time of opening of e-tender**: After 15:00 hrs. on 06.01.2025. For detailed information visit **www.ireps.gov.in**

1424-AR/24

Follow us on : /NWRailways NWRailways_

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-TENDER

CPM /GSU/ NWR Ajmer on behalf of The President of India invites E - Tenders for the following work up to **15.00 Hrs.** on the mentioned date. **Tender No.: GSU-All-UDZLL910-01-24-25**. **Name of work:** Earthwork in cutting/formation extension of minor bridges, supply of stone ballast of 65 mm size (Hard Stone). Transportation of P.Way material, Laying & Linking of BG track including Point-xing, Dismantling of civil structures and other miscellaneous work in c/w converting stabling line no. 9 into running line and a passenger PF line at Udaipur station. **Approximate cost of work:** ₹ 1,31,53,275.56. **Bid Security:** ₹ 2,15,800/-. **Date & Time of closing E-Tender:** 30.12.2024 at 15.00 Hrs. **Date & Time of opening E-Tender:** 30.12.2024 at 15.30 Hrs. The details of above E - tender are available on website **www.ireps.gov.in**

1416-AR/24

Follow us on : /NWRailways NWRailways_

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-TENDER NOTICE FOR MECHANICAL WORK YEAR 2024-25, Date : 10.12.2024. NIT No.: 35/2024-25 (C&W JU). Name of work, location & Period: Design, Supply, installation & Commissioning of Water Recycling Plant of cap 150 KLD at Barmer Laundry with maintenance and operation including consumables during warranty period of one year and Annual maintenance and operation for 4 years with consumables. **Approx. cost of the work**: ₹ 3,27,06,965/-. **Earnest money to be deposited**: ₹ 3,13,500/-. **Date and time for submission of tender and opening of tender**: On 03.01.2025 till 15:00 hrs through E-tendering online submission on IREPS, Tender will be opened soon after. **website particular and notice board location where complete details of tender can be seen etc.**: **www.ireps.gov.in** Sr Section Engineer (C&W) NWR, Jodhpur's notice board. **NOTE**: The offer can only be accepted through E-Tendering on the website of **www.ireps.gov.in**/, Offer in any other form will not be accepted. The tenderer/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate & must be register on IREPS portal. Only registered tenderer/bidders can participate on e-Tendering. All relevant paper must be uploaded at the time of participating in e-Tendering.

1419-AR/24

Follow us on : /NWRailways NWRailways_

Government of Karnataka

TOWN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MUDDEBIHAL

Phone: 08356-220876

Email: itstaff_ulb_muddebihal@yahoo.co.in

No:TMC/SFC SPL GRANT/Notification/CR-/2024-25 Date:07.12.2024

Short Teem E-Procurement Tender Notification

Town Municipal Council Muddebihal Invites tender from eligible tenders registered in KPWD for the 01 work under SFC Special Grant 2022-23, 2023-24 and Municipal Fund. Tender are called in standard tender Document KW-4 through KPP Portal For further details visit online website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Note: Tender Corrigendum and Addendum will be issued in KPP Portal only.

1) DMA/2024-25/BD/WORK_INDENT33356

1) Last Date for Tender Submission: 23.12.2024 Time 5.00 PM

Sd/- Chief Officer **TMC Muddebihal**

Sd/- President **TMC Muddebihal**

ವಾಸಾಸಂ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/496/ಕೆಎಸ್.ಎಂಸಿಎ/2024–25

BUSINESS CONNECT — A Business Initiative

Canara Bank Conducts a two-day Pan - India MSME Cluster programme

Demonstrating its unwavering commitment to the growth of India' s MSMEs, Canara Bank, one of the leading public sector banks, organized a two-day nationwide Credit Outreach programme across 238 MSME clusters in key industrial and business regions involving all Circles, Regions and branches of the bank, offering entrepreneurs with tailored MSME products, financial advisory services, interactive sessions and access to Govt. Sponsored Schemes. The credit outreach programmes were attended by Shri. K. Satyanarayana Raju, MD and CEO, along with Shri. Debashish Mukherjee, Executive Director, Shri. Ashok Chandra, Executive Director, Shri. Hardeep Singh Ahluwalia, Executive Director, Shri. Bhavendra Kumar, Executive Director, and Chief GM/ GM along with other executives of the bank. During the programme, the Top Management of the bank emphasized the significance of MSME sector for economic growth and reiterated the commitment of Canara Bank towards empowering MSMEs for driving economic growth of the nation. During the interactive sessions, senior officials discussed challenges faced by the entrepreneurs, explored practical solutions and showcased the bank's tailored financial offerings. The two-day campaign witnessed an enthusiastic response from MSME entrepreneurs, with on- the-spot loan sanctions and mobilized leads more than Rs.6200 Crore.

BEL receives orders worth Rs.634 Crores

Navratna Defence Public Sector Undertaking Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) has secured additional orders worth Rs.634 Crores since the last disclosure on November 8, 2024. Major orders include maintenance of Akash Missile System, telescopic sights for guns, communication equipment, jammers, electronic voting machines, test stations, spares, services, etc. With these orders, BEL has now accumulated orders totalling Rs.8,828 Crores in the current financial year.

BEML Bags 136 Crore Ministry of Defence Contract for High Mobility Vehicles 8x8

BEML Limited, a premier Defence Public Sector Undertaking under the Ministry of Defence, has achieved a significant milestone by securing a 136 crore contract for the supply of indigenously designed High Mobility Vehicles (HMV) 8x8. These vehicles will play a pivotal role in the Battle Field Surveillance System (BFSS) Project, reinforcing India's defence capabilities and advancing the Government's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Manufactured at BEML's state-of-the-art facilities, the HMV 8x8 is designed to deliver exceptional reliability and versatility, even in the most challenging environments. The Vehicle ensure superior mobility, stability, and operational safety. The vehicles are capable of operating in extreme climates. Commenting on this achievement, Shri Shantanu Roy, CMD, BEML, stated that this contract is a testament to BEML's unwavering commitment to innovation and self-reliance in defence manufacturing. The indigenously developed HMV 8x8 vehicles showcase their engineering excellence and dedication to equipping India's armed forces with cutting-edge mobility solutions. BEML continues to play a transformative role in modernizing India's defence infrastructure, offering world-class solutions that strengthen the nation's armed forces and bolster its self-reliance for a secure future.

Boost to Indian Sports: Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) - Sports Authority of India (SAI) High Performance Centre to Come Up in Bengaluru

HAL, a Maharatna CPSE, signed a MoU with National Sports Development Fund (NSDF) and SAI yesterday for establishment of a state-of-the-art "HAL-SAI High Performance Centre" at SAI, Nethaji Subhas Southern Centre, Bengaluru, under its CSR Initiatives. This collaborative effort aims to elevate India's sporting prowess. Dr D K Sunil, CMD, HAL, Dr Divya Gupta, Independent Director, Shri A B Pradhan, Director (HR), HAL, Col Rakesh Yadav, Jt. CEO, TOPS, Shri Vishnu Sudhakaran, Regional Director, SAI, Shri Kamkhan Singh, Under Secretary, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS), and senior officials were present on this occasion. HAL has always been at the forefront of developing Sports in the country. This "HAL-SAI High Performance Centre" represents a significant milestone in HAL's journey to unlock India's sporting potential. With this state-of-the-art facility, athletes will have best chances to succeed at the international levels including the Olympics and enhance the national pride. CSR is an integral part of HAL. As the company grows and prospers, HAL remains committed to giving back to the society. It has also taken up various CSR projects in various fields such as Health, Drinking Water, Sanitation, Education, Skill Development, Rural Development, Renewable energy, livelihood enhancement etc.

Bank of Baroda Celebrates International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2024 under the theme "BankAbilities - Banking on the Abilities of the Differently Abled"

Bank of Baroda one of India's leading public sector banks, marked the International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2024 with a special event at its Corporate Office titled "BankAbilities - Banking on the Abilities of the Differently Abled", underscoring the Bank's commitment to recognise diversity, foster inclusion, and celebrate the unique abilities of differently-abled individuals, Shri Debadatta Chand, MD & CEO of the Bank extended his good wishes and support to the differently abled for achieving their aspirations. On the occasion, the Bank announced the introduction of complimentary Doorstep Banking Services for all its differently abled customers, both existing and new. These customers can avail one free Doorstep Banking service every month for the next 1 year. The Bank honoured Ms. Geeta Chouhan, Captain of India's Wheelchair Basketball Women's team and a paraplegic sports personality, for her outstanding contributions and achievements in the field of sports. Following the inauguration of BankAbilities at the Corporate Office, the Bank has planned various initiatives at its Regional and Zonal Offices to raise awareness about the rights of PWDs and promote their inclusion. These efforts focus on celebrating the strengths of PWD employees and ensuring preferential treatment for PWD customers.

Climate impact of exploring space passing below the radar

Making satellites is an energy-intensive process. Every launch also releases carbon dioxide, black carbon, and water vapour. Rocket propellants deplete the ozone layer and disrupt atmospheric circulation. Satellites burning up in the air release ash into the atmosphere's middle layers

Shrawani Shagun

As the world becomes more reliant on space technology for vital functions like climate monitoring, the environmental consequences of space activities also become increasingly urgent and in need of more attention. The rapid growth of the number of satellites in orbit has led to concerns about interference with climate monitoring systems and the accumulation of orbital debris. With no specific international regulations addressing these challenges, it is crucial the world's governments act quickly to ensure space exploration doesn't drift into unsustainability.

A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket lifts off from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Florida. The rocket carried 23 Starlink satellites. AP

How rockets affect the environment

Every rocket launch releases carbon dioxide, black carbon, and water vapour into the atmosphere. Black carbon is of particular concern because it absorbs sunlight 500 times more effectively than carbon dioxide does, amplifying global warming. As commercial space ventures become more common, the cumulative impact of these emissions will worsen.

Rocket propellants, especially those using chlorine-based chemicals, deplete the ozone layer at high altitudes, increasing exposure to ultraviolet radiation on the ground as well as disrupting atmospheric circulation – both of which affect the global climate. According to a December 9 article in *MIT Tech Review*, when satellites "burn up in the atmosphere" once their missions end, they release "satellite ash in the middle layers of the earth's atmosphere. This metallic ash can harm the atmosphere and potentially alter the climate."

Next, like many other forms of manufacturing, the production of satellites demands energy-intensive processes involving metals and composite materials, whose extraction and preparation have large carbon footprints of their own. Satellites also use propulsion systems to adjust their location and orientation in orbit, and their emissions add to the overall count. Equally, the rise of space mining – e.g. extracting valuable (on the earth) minerals from asteroids – could lead to increased industrial activity both in space and on the ground. Such mining activities haven't begun yet, but they are sure to be part of the future.

While space technology supports essential climate monitoring and disaster management, the environmental costs for the earth's atmosphere and space are escalating, requiring urgent redressal.

Dangers of orbital debris

Orbital debris, or space junk, refers to defunct satellites, spent rocket stages, and pieces of satellites produced when they break apart in low earth orbit (LEO). According to the European Space Agency, as of September 2024, there had been around 6,740 rocket launches since 1957 that placed 19,590 satellites in orbit. Around 13,230 are still in space, and of them 10,200 are still functional.

Since the space in earth's orbit is a resource just like water bodies and land masses on the ground, the occupation of orbits by non-functional objects constitutes a form of pollution as well – with the added threat of risk magnification.

For example, space surveillance networks have catalogued around 36,860 space objects thus far, including those produced in the 650+ fragmentation events (break-ups, explosions, and collisions). The total mass of all space objects in orbit exceeds 13,000 tonnes. As this mass continues to increase, the collision risks to satellites increase as well. Most space junk can reach speeds of up to 29 km/hr. When moving so fast, even a minuscule piece of metal can smash through a satellite like a bullet, damaging critical components, including those used for communication, navigation, and to monitor climate parameters of merit.

Orbital debris also poses an indirect threat by interfering with scientists' ability to collect data about the earth – from tracking disasters to monitoring weather – from space, such as by interfering with radio waves. Such threats also obligate satellite operators to invest in shielding satellites and actively perform costly manoeuvres to avoid collisions; both requirements drive up mission cost.

The risks are even more significant for human-crewed missions. For example, the International Space Station frequently adjusts its orbit to avoid debris.

The mass of objects in orbit exceeds 13,000 tonnes. As this increases, the collision risks increase as well. Most space junk can reach speeds of up to 29 km/hr. Even a minuscule piece can smash through a satellite

Barriers to space sustainability

Regulation is key to ensuring space remains accessible and space activities remain environmentally sustainable. Without clear guidelines, the unchecked growth of emissions and debris will harm the earth's climate and increase the barriers to future space exploration.

Space activities currently fall outside international sustainability instruments like the Paris Agreement, so governments need to establish standards for emissions from rockets and satellites to prevent them from becoming overlooked contributors to global warming.

Without regulations, the increasing number of satellites and debris will overcrowd LEO, rendering future missions more expensive, which in turn would subtract from space's identity as a shared global resource that needs to be equally accessible to everyone. International cooperation through bodies like the Committee on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space (COPUOS) is necessary to create enforceable standards in this context.

Governments can also ensure such frameworks align with the Outer Space Treaty's principles of responsible use of space while addressing the treaty's current lack of binding provisions. This unity is particularly crucial if countries are to address the environmental impacts of space activities.

Achieving sustainability

Achieving sustainability in space exploration requires innovative solutions, which also present challenges of their own. For example, reusable rockets like those developed by SpaceX and Blue Origin reduce manufacturing waste and lower costs by allowing engineers to reuse rocket components in multiple missions. But the reusable parts are often heavier, which increases fuel consumption. These also have limited applicability for high-orbit missions, and their wear and tear invokes costly refurbishments. Thus scaling this technology while maintaining efficiency remains a hurdle.

Second, transitioning to cleaner fuels like liquid hydrogen and/or biofuels can minimise harmful emissions during liftoffs. However, hydrogen is currently produced with non-renewable energy, negating its environmental benefits. Cryogenic fuels – which provide more thrust for the same mass – are more expensive and more complex to handle, keeping them out of reach of smaller operators. Electric propulsion is another option, but its low thrust restricts its use to specific missions like in-orbit manoeuvres.

Third, designing satellites with biodegradable materials that naturally disintegrate during re-entry can prevent long-term debris accumulation. On the flip side, these materials currently lack the durability required for the extreme conditions of space. High development costs and limited adoption further slow progress. Autonomous debris removal (ADR) technologies such as robotic arms and laser systems also offer hope for cleaning up orbital debris, but again, they are currently expensive as well as need more legal clarity before they can begin to operate safely.

A global traffic system to monitor satellites and debris in real time could reduce collisions and optimise orbit use. Resistance to data sharing, including due to security and commercial concerns, and the lack of a unified international authority hinder its development, however.

None of these hurdles are permanent, of course. Moreover, whereas individual solutions face significant challenges, a combined approach may be more feasible.

For example, binding agreements through COPUOS can standardise emission limits, debris mitigation, and data-sharing practices; governments and private entities can prioritise funding for green technologies, ADR systems, and satellite biodegradability; and financial rewards, subsidies, or penalties can nudge private actors towards sustainable practices.

At the intersection of technological advancement and environmental responsibility, the choices we make today will define the future of space exploration.

(Shrawani Shagun is pursuing a PhD at National Law University, Delhi, focusing on environmental sustainability and space governance. shrawani.shagun@gmail.com)

Spiral galaxy NGC 628, located 32 million light-years away, in an image taken by the James Webb Space Telescope. REUTERS

Webb confirms the cosmos is expanding at unexpected rate

Reuters

Fresh corroboration of the perplexing observation that the universe is expanding more rapidly than expected has scientists pondering the cause – perhaps some unknown factor involving the mysterious cosmic components – dark energy and dark matter.

Two years of data from NASA's James Webb Space Telescope have now validated the Hubble Space Telescope's earlier finding that the rate of the universe's expansion is faster – by about 8% – than would be expected based on what astrophysicists know of the initial conditions in the cosmos and its evolution over billions of years. The discrepancy is called the Hubble Tension.

The observations by Webb, the most capable space telescope ever deployed, appear to rule out the notion that the data from its forerunner Hubble was somehow flawed due to instrument error.

"This is the largest sample of Webb Telescope data – its first two years in space– and it confirms the puzzling finding from the Hubble Space Telescope that we have been wrestling with for a decade – the universe is now expanding faster than our best theories can explain," said astrophysicist Adam Riess of Johns Hopkins University in Maryland, lead author of the study published on Monday (December 9, 2024) in the Astrophysical Journal.

"Yes, it appears there is something missing in our understanding of the universe," added Riess, a 2011 Nobel laureate in physics for the co-discovery of the universe's accelerating expansion. "Our understanding of the universe contains a lot of ignorance about two elements – dark matter and dark energy – and these make up 96% of the universe, so this is no small matter."

The observations by Webb, the most capable space telescope ever deployed, appear to rule out the notion that the data from its forerunner Hubble was somehow flawed due to instrument error

"The Webb results can be interpreted to suggest there may be a need to revise our model of the universe, although it is very difficult to pinpoint what this is at the moment," said Siyang Li, a Johns Hopkins doctoral student in astronomy and astrophysics and a study co-author.

Dark matter, thought to comprise about 27% of the universe, is a hypothesised form of matter that is invisible but is inferred to exist based on its gravitational effects on ordinary matter - stars, planets, moons, all the stuff on Earth - which accounts for roughly 5% of the universe.

Dark energy, believed to comprise approximately 69% of the universe, is a hypothesised form of energy permeating vast swathes of space that counteracts gravity and drives the universe's accelerating expansion.

What might explain the anomalous expansion rate? "There are many hypotheses that involve dark matter, dark energy, dark radiation – for example, neutrinos (a type of ghostly subatomic particle) – or gravity itself having some exotic properties as possible explanations," Riess said.

The researchers employed three different methods to measure a specific telltale metric – distances from the earth to galaxies where a type of pulsating star called Cepheids has been documented. The Webb and Hubble measurements were in harmony.

Please send in your answers to science@thehindu.co.in

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

Could you slow down?

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1

In km/hr, the value of this unit is 1.14×10^{-13}. It translates to one micrometre per year and is used in the earth sciences to measure the speed at which a surface becomes narrower or less thick due to erosion. What's the unit called?

QUESTION 2

X is rising at 0.3 trillionths of a km around the world every hour. While this seems slow, it's becoming faster thanks to global warming and researchers and lawmakers alike are concerned that X will eventually pose great harm to countries everywhere with a shoreline. What is X?

QUESTION 3

In one billion years, Y will have moved 4.7 km away from the earth. If we work backwards, this means Y was once only 22,500 km away from the earth and over time moved to its position 4 lakh km away today. Name Y.

QUESTION 4

_____ is the world's fastest-growing woody plant and grows at 0.000014 metres every 24 hours. This rapidity has prompted scientists to suggest they might be good for afforestation and carbon sequestration. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 5

In 1995, Archie set a world record (at the time) for being the fastest _____ by travelling a distance of 33 cm in just two minutes at the world championship in Congham, UK. Fill in the blank.

Answers to December 10 quiz:

1. Procedure in which a live animal is dissected – **Ans: Vivisection**
2. Person credited with discovering hormones – **Ans: William Bayliss**
3. First known gaseous hormone – **Ans: Ethylene**
4. Series of reactions launched by hormone reaching its target – **Ans: Signal transduction**
5. Name for hormones that act on cells that secrete it – **Ans: Autocrine**

First contact: K.N. Viswanathan | Basavaraj Meti | Anmol Agrawal | A. Izhar

Visual: In the 20th century, the melting of parts of this glacier was responsible for 4% of the process in Q2. It's also one of the world's fastest glaciers at 4 mm/s. Name the island to which it's 'attached.' CREDIT: GILES LAURENT (CC BY-SA 4.0)

For feedback and suggestions for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

Shakti scheme boosts bus ridership by 23.17 lakh passengers daily in State

Introduced on June 11, 2023, it is one of the five flagship guarantee schemes rolled out by the Congress government after assuming office last year; plans are in place to add another 1,346 buses

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

The Karnataka government's ambitious Shakti scheme, which offers free bus travel to women domiciled in the State, has led to a significant rise in public bus ridership. According to the Transport Department, the State-run transport corporations have recorded an average increase of 23.17 lakh passengers daily since the scheme's launch.

Data from the Transport Department shows a marked increase in daily ridership on State-run buses. Before the Shakti scheme, an average of 93.46 lakh passengers used these buses daily. After its implementation, the figure surged to 116.63 lakh passengers. The Shakti scheme, introduced on June 11, 2023, is one of the five flagship guarantee schemes rolled out by the Congress government after assuming office last year. This initiative aims to empower women by enhancing their mobility.

Average daily passengers in State RTCs
(in lakh)

RTC	Before Shakti scheme	After Shakti scheme	Average increase
KSRTC	29.72	34.79	5.07
BMTC	33.67	40.00	6.33
NWKRTC	16.49	24.87	8.38
KKRTC	13.58	16.97	3.39
Total	93.46	116.63	23.17

Source: Transport Department

Govt. owes ₹1,180.61 cr.

To facilitate the scheme, the four State road transport corporations – Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC), Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (NWKRTC), and Kalyana Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (KKRTC) – collectively spent ₹4,38,036.59 lakh between June 2023 and March 2024.

However, the government has reimbursed ₹3,19,975 lakh to these corporations based on the number of zero-fare tickets issued to women commuters during the same period. This leaves a pending amount of ₹1,18,061.59 lakh, yet to be reimbursed, according to data.

Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy shared these details during the Winter Session of the Assembly held in Belagavi.

Addressing queries about the scheme, the Minister emphasised its success, stating that the increase in passenger numbers reflects how beneficial it has been for women commuters. "To cope with the increased demand for public transportation, the government has added 4,304 new buses from 2023 until December 2024. Furthermore, plans are in place to add another 1,346 buses across the four corporations to ensure a smooth travel experience for all passengers," he said.

BBMP street vendors' survey to conclude by December 20

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The survey of street vendors across all zones of BBMP will be completed by December 20, said Suralkar Vikas Kishore, Special Commissioner (Revenue), BBMP.

The survey is being conducted under the provisions of the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014, and the Karnataka Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood, Regulation, and Licensing) Scheme, 2020.

Surveyors are gathering data using mobile software, and as of now, 23,407 street vendors have been identified across BBMP's eight zones, Mr. Kishor informed.

Based on the survey findings, eligible street vendors will receive identity cards and certificates. Additionally, Town Vending Committees will be formed at the zonal level to implement plans for the welfare and regulation of street vendors under the same legislative framework, he said.

In figures

Zone	Surveyed vendors
Bengaluru West	5,727
South	4,417
R.R. Nagar	3,448
Bengaluru East	3,067
Bommanahalli	2,156
Mahadevapura	1,669
Yelahanka	1,572
Dasarahalli	1,351
Total	23,407

The BBMP said in collaboration with the Central and State governments, it is ensuring that welfare measures reach street vendors, including assistance under PM SVANidhi Scheme, financial aid for purchasing e-commerce vehicles, subsidies for housing schemes, medical reimbursement for serious illnesses, skill development training, reimbursement of educational fees for children of street vendors, and others.

From Page One

Krishna cremated with state honours

After the completion of the state protocol, the national flag which draped the mortal remains of Krishna was respectfully removed and handed over to Krishna's wife, Prema, marking the culmination of the state protocol.

The traditional rites commenced later and the body was shifted from the coffin to a decorated bier and taken to the pyre amidst chanting of hymns. A battery of 15 priests, led by Bhanuprakash Sharma, officiated, and the rituals were performed by Amartya Hegde – grandson of Krishna and son-in-law of Mr. Shivakumar – who lit the funeral pyre.

Family members of Krishna, including his daughters – Malavika and Shambhavi – and other relatives were present. A large number of people from Somanahalli and surrounding villages had gathered to pay their last respects to the departed leader. The district administration had made elaborate arrangements for the last rites which was monitored by Mr. Shivakumar.

Additional police personnel were deployed from Mandya, Mysuru, and surrounding districts for security.

A drive to plant 10,000 native trees in city

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

United Way Bengaluru, an NGO, in collaboration with Visa Foundation, the philanthropic arm of California-based Visa Inc., will plant 10,000 native trees to enhance green cover in the city.

It will also take up a drive for rainwater conservation and increasing the groundwater table by digging 117 new percolation wells across Bengaluru. The NGO has already dug around 3,000 percolation wells across the city and plan is to have 10,000 such wells by the end of 2025.

Visa Foundation has committed ₹2 crore to carry out the greening exercise as part of the expansion of its environmental initiatives, said United Way Bengaluru. The initiative in India was chosen by employees of Visa in Bengaluru through a survey.

Issue fresh TDR as per guidance value for Palace Grounds land, SC tells State govt.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The State government has suffered a setback in the Palace Grounds case, as the Supreme Court on Tuesday ordered it to issue fresh Transferable Development Rights (TDR) to the members of the Mysuru royal family, as per the guidance value of adjoining lands, in the next six weeks.

The civic agencies had issued the royal family TDR worth ₹1 crore for 15 acres 17.5 guntas of land on Ballari Road and Jayamahal Road acquired for road widening. They claimed to have calculated the compensation based on Bangalore Palace (Acquisition and Transfer) Act, 1996, and not as per the Karnataka Stamps Act, 1957, in June earlier this year and took possession of the land in July. However, this was challenged.

Now, with the apex court ordering the agencies to issue fresh TDR as per guidance value of adjoining properties in line with the Karnataka Stamps Act, 1957, the value of TDR to be given to the royal family is expected to exceed ₹2,000 crore. The guidance value in the area as per revised values in 2023-24, is ₹2.83 lakh/sq.m on Ballari Road and ₹2.04 lakh/sq.m on Jayamahal Road.

A compound wall being built for Palace Ground at Jayamahal road in Bengaluru. FILE PHOTO

"....the State and its authorities have intentionally dragged its feet for long number of years and having attempted to tap all the mirage remedies and left with no other option and to stave off these proceedings have passed the orders.. ...to issue the TDR on an estimate value which is not accepted by this court.. still an opportunity to issue TDR as per market value as envisaged under Karnataka Stamp Act, 1957...ought to be extended to the respondents/contemnors," the apex court order of December 10 read. The court imposed a cost of 1 lakh on the respondent authorities for creating a "*faux pas* situation" to be paid to each of the petitioners.

In its order, the apex court pointed out that "the State itself has categorically admitted in its Government Order dated 23.02.2021 the value of the TDR to be issued in favour of the claimants as per guidance value. However, it has determined the value as 0.4 times of the land value...on the premise that it is to be construed as agricultural land". However, arguing that the said land was "utilised as a private residence of the then Maharaja of Mysore for a long number of years and it is situated in the heart of the city", the court rejected this premise as well.

"Hence, we are of the considered view that the State and its instrumentalities and/or the competent authority being the BBMP is required to issue the TDR as per the then prevailing guidance value fixed under Section 45B of Karnataka Stamp Act, 1957 namely ₹2,83,500/sq m for Ballari Road and ₹2,04,000/sq m for Jayamahal Road as indicated under the notifications issued under Section 45B of the Karnataka Stamp Act, 1957," the apex court said.

However, this order would have no bearing on the contentions of both the parties in pending appeals, the apex court said.

Conference on mechanics of advanced materials held

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The inaugural programme of the 4th International conference on Mechanics of Advanced Materials and Structures organised by Ramaiah Institute of Technology (RIT), Bengaluru, Texas A&M University, USA, and Politecnico di Torino, Italy, held at RIT on Wednesday.

The conference focused on the latest developments in the mechanics of advanced materials, innovative structural designs and their applications in sustainable engineering. Over 125 research papers were presented. Chief guest V.K. Aatre, former Scientific Advisor to Defence Minister, emphasised the role of technology. M.R. Jayaram, chairman, Gokula Education Foundation, stressed the importance of collaborations with leading institutions across the globe to set up technology centres in Ramaiah Institutions for innovative technology and solutions.

Honorary Chair J.N. Reddy of Texas A&M University, USA, conference Chairmen Erasmo Carrera, Politecnico di Torino, Italy, and N.V.R. Naidu, Principal, RIT, also graced the occasion, said a release.

Encore2 concert on Saturday

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Encore2 - Bollywood, Ghazals and Sufi concert will be held on Saturday at Ravindra Kalakshetra, on J.C. Road, at 6 pm.

APPOINTMENT

INDIAN RAILWAY CATERING AND TOURISM CORPORATION LTD.
(A Government of India Enterprise-Mini Ratna Enterprise-I) South Zone
6A, The Rain Tree Place, No.9, Mc Nichols Road, Chetpet, Chennai - 600031
CIN-L74899DL 1999GOI101707

ENGAGEMENT OF APPRENTICES IN THE COPA TRADE

IRCTC invites applications from candidates for engagement as Apprentice under Apprenticeship Act, 1961 in the discipline **Computer Operator and Programming Assistant for Tamil Nadu, Kerala & Karnataka.**

For more details visit website: **https://www.apprenticeshipindia.gov.in & www.irctc.com**

THE HINDU GROUP

A webinar on
UPSC Interview - Tips from Experts

FORTUNE IAS ACADEMY
More than just an academy
Presents
THE HINDU EDUCATIONPLUS
CAREER COUNSELLING SERIES

Learn the best practices for excelling in your UPSC interview from toppers and a former chairman.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2024
10:30 AM ONWARDS

SPEAKERS

Dr D P Agrawal
Former Chairman, Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)

P K Sidharth Ramkumar
IAS Officer Trainee (All India Rank 04, 2024)

Kiran PB
IPS, (National Interview Topper, 2022)

Soma Basu
Senior Deputy Editor, The Hindu (Moderator)

Aspirants who have completed Mains and are awaiting their interviews are encouraged to register.

To register, newsth.live/FIASPA or scan the QR code

Timings
BENGALURU

THURSDAY, DEC. 12	
RISE 06:32	SET 17:55
RISE 15:06	SET 03:10
FRIDAY, DEC. 13	
RISE 06:33	SET 17:55
RISE 15:57	SET 04:11
SATURDAY, DEC. 14	
RISE 06:33	SET 17:56
RISE 16:54	SET 05:15

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	29	23
Mysuru	29	19
Bengaluru	26	19

Bengaluru Today
25°C Morning will be slight cool. Day will be pleasant. Few spells of light to moderate rain and thundershower with gusty winds to occur.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
27°C Morning will be slight cool. Day will be comfortable. Chances of light rain and thundershower at few places.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2024
All rights reserved.

THE HINDU
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

BBMP Special Commissioner to answer queries on e-khata in a live chat today

#THTALKSBENGALURU

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) launched faceless, contactless, and online e-khata system on October 1.

This new system aims to get rid of corruption and bureaucratic apathy. The initiative is led by BBMP Special Commissioner (Revenue) Munish Moudgil.

Although property owners have started downloading draft and final e-khata, questions, confusions and complaints abound.

Munish Moudgil

At 3 p.m.

Mr. Moudgil will address the concerns and queries of property owners in a live chat with the *The Hindu* on December 12 at 3 p.m. Please send your questions to thtalksbengaluru@thehindu.co.in

Cyber fraudsters cheat senior citizen of ₹1.2 cr.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

An 82-year-old woman has filed a complaint with the cybercrime police that crooks posing as CBI officials threatened her with a case, accessed her bank accounts, and made away with ₹1.2 crore.

Based on the complaint, the police registered an FIR against unknown persons on Tuesday, charging them under the IT Act and Sections 113 (organised crime), 318 (cheating), and 319 (impersonation) of BNS.

The victim, a resident of Malleshwaram, said the accused, posing as Mumbai police, called her to inform her that another SIM in her name was being used for illegal activities and money laundering.

The accused connected her to a "senior official" on a WhatsApp call, who introduced himself as a CBI officer and informed her that an FIR had been booked against her for money laundering.

The accused, on the pretext of inquiry, demanded her bank account details for verification and accessed them to transfer ₹1.2 crore from three different bank accounts through RTGS. The police have now sought transaction details to track down the accused.

In another incident, a 49-year-old Japanese national and director of a food company was cheated by a cyber conman who posing as a bank executive cheated him of ₹1.5 lakh on the pretext of helping him update his bank account.

Based on the complaint, the Cubbon Park police registered a case on Friday under the IT Act.

Published by Nirmala Lakshman at No 19&21, Bhagwan Mahaveer Road, Bengaluru-560001 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath (Responsible for selection of news under the PRP Act).
ISSN 0971 - 751X

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Cases resolved through mediation in Thane since 2021

2,330 Altogether 2,330 legal disputes have been resolved through mediation in Maharashtra's Thane since 2021. Ishwar Suryavanshi of the District Legal Services Authority shared figures and underscored the significance of mediation. PTI

Migrants who have landed in the Canary Islands till December

41,425 The number of migrants who are undocumented reaching Spain via the Canaries has increased sharply. 41,425 migrants landed in the Islands between January and November compared to 39,910 for the whole of last year. AFP

Suspects booked for alleged propaganda against Pakistan Army

150 Pakistani authorities have booked 150 suspects and arrested 22 of them, mostly belonging to Imran Khan's party, for allegedly posting against the army on social media about the killings of party workers in Islamabad on November 26, an official said on Wednesday. PTI

The temperature recorded in Sikar, Rajasthan on Tuesday

1.5 degrees Celsius. Temperatures in parts of Rajasthan dropped over the 24 hours leading up to 8:30 am on Wednesday, with extreme cold wave conditions recorded in one or two areas, the India Meteorological Department said. The lowest minimum temperature was recorded in Sikar. PTI

The conviction rate recorded by National Investigation Agency

95.23 In per cent. The National Investigation Agency (NIA), which registered 640 cases since its inception, has recorded a conviction rate of 95.23% in 147 cases which have been decided by courts. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

Follow us facebook.com/thehindu twitter.com/the_hindu instagram.com/the_hindu

The mosques which face survey petitions

Why has an oral observation made by Former Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud led to repercussions at the lower judiciary? What is the contestation against the origins of the Adhai Din Ka Jhonpra and the Ajmer dargah? What about the provisions of the Places of Worship Act, 1991?

EXPLAINER

Ziya Us Salam

The story so far:

During a hearing of the Gyanvapi petition in 2022, Justice D.Y. Chandrachud made an oral observation that Sections 3 and 4 of the Places of Worship Act, 1991 do not prohibit the "ascertainment of religious character" of any place of worship. His oral observation has had repercussions at the lower judiciary with a number of districts and sessions courts in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan admitting petitions seeking to "ascertain the religious character" of mosques and other places of worship built in medieval India and ordering their surveys. Among the places facing calls for survey are the Ajmer Dargah, Adhai Din ka Jhonpra, the Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal, the Teelewali Masjid in Lucknow, the Shamsi Jama Masjid in Badaun, the Atala Masjid in Jaunpur besides the better known cases of Gyanvapi Masjid, and Eidgah in Mathura.

Are calls for surveys increasing?

Shortly after a civil judge in Sambhal ordered a survey of the town's Jama Masjid on November 19, there has been a slew of petitions calling for surveys of mosques and dargahs. On November 24, there was a repeat survey of the Sambhal mosque which led to violence in which six people were killed. Following the violence, the Supreme Court asked the report of the advocate commissioner to be kept in a sealed cover, and directed the mosque's committee to approach the Allahabad High Court to hear the case.

Around the same time, Ajmer's West Civil Court admitted a petition claiming that the Ajmer dargah was originally a Sankat Mochan Mandir. The demand led to uproar as the dargah is frequented by people of all religions and the Prime Minister himself sends a chador for its annual Urs in January. Disturbed by these petitions, a number of retired bureaucrats and Army personnel wrote to the Prime Minister asking him to curtail what they called, an "ideological assault on India's civilisational heritage".

Historic site: People outside the Ajmer Sharif Dargah in Ajmer, Rajasthan, on November 28. PTI

What about Adhai Din ka Jhonpra?

The dargah petition triggered demand for the restoration of the 12th century mosque Adhai Din Ka Jhonpra to its alleged pre-Islamic heritage. The mosque, located a few minutes away from the dargah, is an Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) protected site. The demand came from Ajmer's Deputy Mayor Neeraj Jain who reiterated claims that the Adhai Din Ka Jhonpra was originally a Sanskrit college and a temple before being demolished towards the end of 12th century. Earlier the demand for a Sanskrit college and a temple at the site was raised after a Jain monk visited the mosque along with some functionaries of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad. Soon after Rajasthan Assembly speaker Vasudev Devnani demanded an ASI survey at the historic site, arguing, "An ASI survey should immediately be done at Adhai Din Ka Jhonpra to find out whether the Jain delegates' claim is true. It's a subject to research whether it was occupied and converted into a mosque."

The mosque was built by Qutubddin Aibak around the time he built the Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid in the Qutub Minar complex in Delhi. Sultan Iltutmish beautified it in AD 1213 with a screen pierced by corbelled engrailed arches which appears in this country for the first time. A protected monument, its name stems from an *Urs* (fair) that used to be held here for two and a half days. Hence the expression *Adhai Din* or two and a half days. However, the claim of the site being a mosque has been disputed by author Har Bilas Sarda who argued in his book, *Ajmer: Historical and Descriptive*, that Seth Viramdeva Kala built a Jain temple here in celebration of the Jain festival Panch Kalyan Mahotsava in 660 AD. The temple was destroyed by Afghans of Ghor in 1192, he claimed.

The ASI doesn't agree with the assertion. About the mosque, the ASI website states, "It was commenced by Qutubuddin Aibak in about 1200 AD with carved pillars used in colonnades... The pillared (prayer) chamber is divided into nine octagonal compartments and has two small minarets on top of the central arch. The three central arches carved with Kufic and Tughra inscriptions make it a splendid architectural masterpiece."

What about the Shamsi Jama Masjid?

The 800-year-old Shamsi Jama Masjid is the latest mosque to face contestation. A fast-track court is hearing the claims of Mukesh Patel of the Hindu Mahasabha who filed a claim against the mosque, insisting it was an ancient Neelkanth Mahadev temple. In response, the Shamsi Shahi mosque's intezamia committee argued the suit was non-maintainable. Incidentally, the mosque is built on an elevated area called Sotha Mohalla, and is said to be the highest structure in Badaun town. After Quwwatul Islam and Adhai Din ka jJhonpra, it is the third oldest mosque in north India.

After Badaun, cries are being made about the historic Jama Masjid in Delhi too – that it's built at the site of a Vishnu temple. With the districts and sessions courts continuing to freely admit such petitions, the provisions of the Places of Worship Act 1991 which prohibit changing the character of places of worship as they stood on August 15, 1947, stand ignored. Meanwhile, the All India Muslim Personal Law Board appealed to the Supreme Court to take suo moto notice of such petitions and bar the lower level judiciary from entertaining them in the future.

THE GIST

- Shortly after a civil judge in Sambhal ordered a survey of the town's Jama Masjid on November 19, there has been a slew of petitions calling for surveys of mosques and dargahs.
- Among the places facing calls for survey are the Ajmer Dargah, Adhai Din ka Jhonpra, the Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal, the Teelewali Masjid in Lucknow besides the known cases of Varanasi's Gyanvapi Masjid, and the Eidgah in Mathura.
- The 800-year-old Shamsi Jama Masjid is the latest mosque to face contestation. A fast-track court is hearing the claims of Mukesh Patel of the Hindu Mahasabha who filed a claim against the mosque, insisting it was an ancient Neelkanth Mahadev temple.

Has the government clarified its stance on ONOS?

Why did the 'One Nation, One Subscription' plan invoke criticism after it was unveiled last month?

The Hindu Bureau

The story so far:

On November 25, the Indian government announced the launch of its 'One Nation, One Subscription' (ONOS) plan to improve access to research journals for the country's public education and research institutes. The announcement was accompanied with scant details and broached widespread criticism from the research community, especially over what was perceived to be its disproportionate expense and lack of support for open-access publishing. On December 11, government officials conducted a press conference in New Delhi that addressed many of these concerns.

What is ONOS's purpose?

When scientists conclude an experiment, they write up their methods and findings and publish it as a paper in a journal. The journal collects, reviews, edits, publishes, and archives these papers as a service to other scholars and the people at large. In exchange, journals levy a fee. Subscription-based journals charge readers a fee to read papers. Some forms of Open-Access (OA) journals, called 'gold' OA, charge researchers to publish their paper. Institutes in India had subscribed to subscription journals through 10 or so consortia within the country. ONOS will replace these consortia as a single window through which all government-funded institutes in the country will be able to access more than 13,000 journals published by 30 major international publishers.

Why did ONOS provoke criticism?

At the time of announcement, a Ministry of Education press release didn't specify which journals would be part of ONOS, how ONOS would be implemented, how its allocation of ₹6,000 crore (for three calendar years) would be spent, and how ONOS would support efforts to make research OA. Experts on the topic also asked whether the allocation for foreign journals could have been used to support domestic publishing efforts instead.

Also it wasn't clear whether ONOS would help scientists pay to publish in gold OA journals or whether these payments – called article processing charges (APCs) – could be discounted.

What was revealed on December 11?

The press conference was attended by officials from the office of the Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA), the Department of Science & Technology, and the Department of Higher Education.

The package: Students and staff at all public institutes will be able to access all papers in the journals participating in ONOS irrespective of their discipline. Negotiations are underway to bring in more journals.

Phases: Remya Haridasan, a scientist at the PSA's office, said the government would implement ONOS in three phases: (i) merge all the consortia and work to facilitate journal access in all public institutes; (ii) expand to include private institutions; (iii) create "universal access" to all citizens "through designated access points at public libraries".

Open access: In a pilot, ONOS would set aside ₹150 crore a year to pay for APCs. The government has also negotiated APC discounts for researchers to publish in certain OA journals. The officials said they are aware of transformative OA models and that ONOS would encompass them as it progressed. As of today, they said, around 65% of papers published by Indian scientists were in subscription-based journals.

Domestic efforts: Officials at the press conference acknowledged the need to support domestic publishers. They said there were five repositories in the country – servers where researchers could deposit digital copies of their papers and where others could freely access them – but that scientists were using them to a less-than-ideal degree. They added that other efforts need to take place, such as "enhancement, promotion, and support of Indian journals" and changes in how institutes evaluate the work of researchers, especially to reduce dependence on journal titles and increase focus on the merit of each person's work.

THE GIST

- On November 25, the Indian government announced the launch of its 'One Nation, One Subscription' (ONOS) plan to improve access to research journals for the country's public education and research institutes.
- At the time of announcement, a Ministry of Education press release didn't specify which journals would be part of ONOS, how ONOS would be implemented, how its allocation of ₹6,000 crore (for three calendar years) would be spent, and how ONOS would support efforts to make research OA.
- On December 11, government officials conducted a press conference that addressed many of these concerns.

Krishna went places, but stayed in touch with his roots, say Somanahalli residents

They recollect his visits to the village, his contributions and the development model he pursued during his long political journey

Shankar Bennur
SOMANAHALLI (MANDYA DIST.)

The grieving villagers of Somanahalli in Maddur taluk proudly remembered the son of Mandya, former Chief Minister S.M. Krishna, who died in Bengaluru on Tuesday and was cremated in the village on Wednesday. They recollected his contributions and the development model he pursued during his long political journey.

Besides remembering his visits to the village and interactions with his acquaintances and the villagers, the residents especially recollected the construction of the Bengaluru-Mysuru highway that passes through Somanahalli, and the industrial areas he developed that helped in the setting up of several small-scale industries and the jobs they created for the locals.

Many people who had gathered outside the ancestral house of S.M. Krishna at Somanahalli in Maddur taluk on Wednesday recalled their association with the the former CM. M.A. SRIRAM

Role of highway

C.D. Devaiah, a native of Mandya, who used to be in touch with the former Chief Minister, said the people of Mandya would always remember the veteran leader.

The highway changed the district's profile and developed the corridor, bringing jobs to the locals. Tubinakere, Gejjalagere, and Somanahalli developed industrially because of his vision, he said.

Prasad, 86, a retired government employee, whose house is close to Krishna's ancestral home, said the former Chief Minister was always in touch with his roots despite his rise in the State and national politics. "He used to visit Somanahalli and speak to the locals. My last meeting with the veteran leader was six months ago," he recalled.

Mr. Prasad showed the government school where Kirshna studied which is right in front of his ancestral home. Krishna studied in the village till class 7 and later went to Ramakrishna Vidyashala in Mysuru for further schooling. "Mahatma Gandhi had visited the ancestral home of Krishna. His father was active in the freedom movement. I have seen the photo of Krishna with Mahatma Gandhi," said Mr. Prasad, asking us to visit the home and see the photo.

Doors always open

Former member of Mandya Municipal Council S. Kumaraswamy, who belongs to Somanahalli, recalled his association with Krishna and his last meeting at his residence in Bengaluru a few months ago. "The doors of his Sadashivanagar residence were always open for his admirers and the people from his village. From 11 a.m. onwards, he used to meet the people, discuss their problems and offer help."

Guruswamy from Tubinakere recalled how Kirhsna used to identify people from Mandya and remember their names. "He used to acknowledge them and call them by their names. He was much admired and respected for his demeanour and the way he showed affection to his people."

Govt. urged to confer Karnataka Ratna on ex-CM posthumously

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Leaders cutting across party lines have urged the Congress government led by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to confer Karnataka Ratna award on former Chief Minister S.M. Krishna, posthumously.

Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok, Kannada and Culture Minister Shivaraj Tangadagi, Dinesh Gooli Gowda, Congress MLC, and several Congress leaders of Mandya district have appealed to Mr. Siddaramaiah to honour Krishna, who passed away on Tuesday, with the highest civilian award in the State.

The demand to confer the award came at a time when Mandya district, the native of Krishna, is hosting the Akila Bharata Kannada Sahitya Sammelana from December 20.

Letter to CM

In a letter addressed to the Chief Minister, Mr. Tangadagi, Mr. Gooli Gowda and Guarantee Schemes Implementation Authority vice-chairman Venkataramane Gowda ('Star' Chandru) said Krishna had served in various posts and deserved to be given the award.

Mr. Ashok recalled the contributions of Krishna to developing Bengaluru city, the IT and BT sectors, the midday meal programme in schools and other welfare schemes and urged the government to honour the late leader with the Karnataka Ratna.

Leaders, people from Mandya attend last rites of Krishna in big numbers

The Hindu Bureau
SOMANAHALLI (MANDYA DIST.)

Top political leaders and several elected representatives cutting across party lines attended the funeral of former Chief Minister S.M. Krishna at his ancestral village, Somanahalli, in Maddur taluk of Mandya district on Wednesday. Heads of various religious mutts were also present to pay their last respects to the veteran leader, remembered for his development works and for laying the strong foundation for the growth of IT and BT sectors in Bengaluru.

Elaborate arrangements had been made at the vacant plot next to a Coffee Day outlet on the old Bengaluru-Mysuru highway for the people to pay their last respects to the former Foreign Minister, whose political career began from the district.

The body of Krishna, who passed away in Bengaluru on Tuesday, reached Somanahalli past 2 p.m., and the grieving villagers took turns to pay their homage, until 3.30 p.m. Thereafter, the body was shifted to the cremation area for the last rites. People from Maddur and other taluks of Mandya had been waiting since morning to pay their tribute to one of the tallest leaders the district has produced.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, along with some of his Cabinet colleagues, took part in the funeral ceremony. Some of the Ministers, who had worked with Krishna in his Cabinet, were present. They include G. Parameshwara and H.K. Patil.

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, whose elder daughter is married to Krishna's grandson Amartya Hegde, was overseeing the arrangements done for the last rites.

Former CMs present

Three former Chief Ministers – B.S. Yediyurappa, H.D. Kumaraswamy, and Basavaraj Bommai – were among those who were present. Union Minister Pralhad Joshi, State BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra, Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok, senior Ministers, MLAs and MLCs from the Congress, BJP and JD(S) attended. Nirmalanandanatha Swami of Sri Adichunchanagiri Mutt was among the heads of religious mutts present. Former MP for Mandya Sumalatha Ambareesh, leaders from Mandya district, the people who had close association with Krishna, old acquaintances of the former Chief Minister, and relatives were present.

(Clockwise from top left) Police firing in the air as a mark of respect to former Chief Minister S.M. Krishna before he was cremated with state honours at Somanahalli in Maddur taluk of Mandya district on Wednesday; Chief Minister Siddaramaiah handing over the national flag to Prema, wife of the late leader; and family members and former Chief Ministers Basavaraj Bommai, H.D. Kumaraswamy, and B.S. Yediyurappa, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi, and State BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra at the funeral. M.A. SRIRAM

Seer alleges police instigated violence outside Suvarna Soudha

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

A day after Panchamasali reservation agitation in Belagavi turned violent, Basava Jayamruthyunjaya Swami of the Kudalasangama Panchamasali Peetha, honorary president of the Panchamasali reservation agitation committee, denied the charge that members of the committee threw stones, damaged vehicles, and injured police personnel.

He, in turn, alleged that some policemen in plainclothes had thrown stones at vehicles and injured their own fraternity, only to defame the Panchamasali community. He was speaking to reporters after a meeting with the committee leaders at Gandhi Bhavan here on Wednesday.

"The whole thing was a conspiracy. The police staged the attack on the protesters by strategic planning," he alleged.

He went on to allege that Additional Director-General of Police (Law and Order) R. Hitendra was responsible for the mismanagement of the protest and the lathi-charge that ensued. He demanded action against the police officer and demanded that cases registered against the protesters be withdrawn.

Basava Jayamruthyunjaya Swami of the Kudalasangama Panchamasali Peetha addressing presspersons in Belagavi on Wednesday. P.K. BADIGER

"We will not stop our struggle. We will fight in every village from tomorrow. Intensive struggles will be held near the Hattaragi and Hirebagewadi tollgates," he said.

To a query, he said that Tuesday's protest could not be called violent. It was a peaceful protest. The police ordered a lathi-charge without provocation, he alleged. He denied that the committee did not violate the High Court order that asked them to conduct a peaceful protest without causing any law and order disturbance.

"We have been fighting for over two years, to seek the re-categorisation of the Panchamasali community into OBC 2A category. All our protests have been peaceful. No government in the past has oppressed us, or tried to suppress our agitation," the seer said.

The seer denied that Mr. Siddaramaiah had invited him for talks. "The invitation came after the lathi-charge and not before," he said.

To a query, he said he had not provoked the crowd. "It is true that I said that the State government would be responsible for any untoward incident during the tractor rally. I did not mean violence, I meant an intensified struggle in future," he said. "We had given a call for storming of the Suvarna Soudha. It does not mean it was a call for forceful entry," the seer said.

He said three Ministers – Laxmi Hebbalkar, M.C. Sudhakar, and H.C. Mahadevappa – who came to meet the protesters at the Kondaskoppa protest site, did not give any concrete assurance. "Our community members insisted that the Chief Minister come to the protest site and announce reservation benefits to Panchamasalis on the spot. When this was not done, our activists got upset," the seer said.

Three-day conference at IIITB

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The 15th Indian Conference on Computer Vision, Graphics and Image Processing (ICVGIP), the country's premier conference in the sector, will be held at the International Institute of Information Technology Bangalore (IIITB) from December 13 to 15 in association with the Indian Unit for Pattern Recognition and Artificial Intelligence, an affiliate of the International Association for Pattern Recognition.

Over 300 participants from both industry and academia are expected to attend 'ICVGIP 2024'. Academics from countries such as the United States and Germany along with those from top Indian institutions will be speaking at the event.

IIITB will also be hosting the 29th annual International Conference on Advanced Computing and Communications (ADCOM 2024), a flagship event from December 18 to 20. "This year's conference will focus on a 'Responsible AI' framework for developing AI safely and ethically, emphasising fairness, transparency, accountability, privacy, and safety," said a press release from IIITB.

BEL gets orders worth ₹634 cr.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) has secured additional orders worth ₹634 crore since the last disclosure on November 8 .

Major orders include maintenance of the Akash Missile System, telescopic sights for guns, communication equipment, jammers, electronic voting machines, test stations, spares, services, etc.

Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment, Government of Odisha
Directorate of Soil Conservation and Watershed Development Odisha, Krushi Bhawan, Bhubaneswar-751001

Request for Proposal invited for engagement of State Level Support Agency **for Design, Development and Deployment of - Digital library and portal under REWARD pertaining to "Rejuvenating Watersheds for Agricultural Resilience through innovative Development (REWARD) programme, Govt. of Odisha.**

The bidder can access and download the complete RFP and TOR documents with other details from web site — **https://www.soilodisha.nic.in** and e-procurement site of Govt. of Odisha "**tendersodisha.gov.in**. The date and time for submission of proposal through e -procurement portal & our web site is from **12.12.2024 to 02.01.2025 (5.30PM)**. The hard copy of RFP complete in all respects must reach the undersigned by Registered post/ speed post /courier only latest by **09.01.2025 (5.30 PM)** within office hour in a sealed envelope clearly mentioning on the top of it "Request for Proposal (RFP) for engagement of State Level Support Agency **for Design, Development and Deployment of - Digital library and portal under REWARD pertaining to "Rejuvenating Watersheds for Agricultural Resilience through innovative Development (REWARD) programme, Govt. of Odisha.**

The hard copy should address to the Director, Directorate of Soil Conservation and Watershed Development Odisha, Bhubaneswar (DSC&WD), Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment, Government of Odisha, Krushi Bhawan, Keshari Nagar (Near State Guest House), Pin-751001.

The proposal received beyond the last date & time will be rejected. The authority reserves right to reject any/all proposals without assigning any reason thereof.

Director, SC&WD
OIPR-01470/11/0004/2425

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

SAD DEMISE

R. RAMESH (Age 59)
Sahaja Yoga Meditation Practitioner
Attained the lotus feet of God on Sunday 8th December 2024
Survived by
wife Anusha Ramesh
Ph: 97910 28302

Sri M.K. MUTHUVELU,
Director Meticulous Group
Born:13/11/1941 Expired: 11/12/2024
Deeply Mourned by
His wife, daughters and their family members.
Cremation done on
11th December 2024
Contact No: **98405 19210**

DEATH

G R PUSHPA
09.01.1939 - 07.12.2024
Wife of G R Rangaswamy and a mother to not just her children, but the entire Gandharvakottai Ramaswamy Family, her softness, her enduring love and her giving spirit extended even under the toughest of circumstances not just to the people around her, but every living being. As she joins her beloved husband in his heavenly abode barely eight months after his passing, she leaves a void in the hearts of her loved ones that is irreplaceable.
Ph: 044 28157779

IN MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES
To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact:
Bengaluru: 98455 29981,
Hubballi: 0836 - 2338600
Mangaluru: 0824 - 2417575,
from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Online booking: **www.thehinduads.com**
DONATE EYES - GIFT SIGHT

BIBLIOGRAPHY

AFP

Way in the world: how Muslim women travelled from 17th-20th centuries

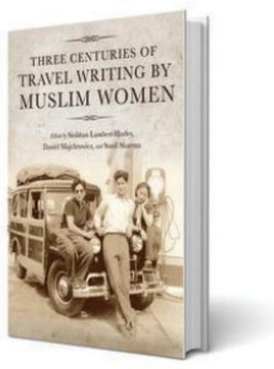
In 45 essays, three editors gather multiple travel accounts by Muslim women who, alone or chaperoned, veiled or unveiled, travelling for work or pleasure, bust every stereotype. Apart from records of the new and the unexpected, there are also observations about all aspects of life

Rakhshanda Jalil

I began reading *Three Centuries of Travel Writing by Muslim Women* (Zubaan Books) chronologically, hoping rather ambitiously to read it from cover to cover, one essay at a time. That was a mistake, I think. The book is better served, and savoured, if the reader were to dip into it in no particular order. Each essay is so precisely contextualised by the immaculate 'Introduction' prefacing each entry and followed by 'Further Reading and 'Notes' that even a casual reader can dip into this richly documented, beautifully translated volume of disparate writings and partake of the spirit behind it.

For the more serious reader/researcher, there is of course the scholarly introduction by Siobhan Lambert-Hurley and Daniel Majchrowicz who edited the book (along with Sunil Sharma). They write: "On the face of it, the premise of this volume is simple: a comparative study of travel narratives by Muslim women who travelled the world before the 'jet age' transformed modern mobility. Yet in our contemporary moment, the very juxtaposition of these terms – Muslim, women, travel mobility – instantly raises a number of questions."

Colonialism, gender, travel, religion, money come together in unexpected ways throughout this book. What is more, these accounts by educated and "privileged" Muslim women also contain descriptions – sometimes empathetic, occasionally derisive – of other Muslim women they meet during their travels who are poor and disadvantaged and, being illiterate, could not have recorded their experiences or left written records of their lives. So, apart from records of the new and the unexpected, there are also observations about the different practices of child-rearing, food, cooking habits, dress, religious and social practices.



Multiple voices

These first-hand accounts, originally written in Urdu, Persian, Arabic, Turkish, Chaghtaai Turki, Punjabi, Bengali, Indonesian, German and English, span the 17th to 20th centuries thus presenting an array of experiences and impressions. Written variously as conventional travelogues (Halide Edib, Zainab Cobbold), excerpts from autobiographies (Salamah Bint Said/Emily Ruete, Huda Shaarawi), diary entries (Muhammadi Begum, Begum Hasrat Mohani), written for limited circulation as magazine articles (Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, Shams Pahlavi), recorded for family and friends (Begum Sarbuland Jung, Ummat al-Ghani Nur al-Nisa), or with a pronounced political overtone (Suharti Suwarto, Melek Hanim) quite naturally, therefore, present different voices and concerns. Chatty, informal, informed when the writing is for herself or her family members; or formal, structured, detailed, sometimes even didactic when she knows what she is writing is meant for public consumption.

Travel as life

There are 45 accounts in all, grouped under four headings: Travel as Pilgrimage, Travel as Emancipation and Politics, Travel as Education, and Travel as Obligation and Pleasure. While large numbers of Indian women have written haj accounts, there is only one Indian in the second section, Shareefah Hamid Ali, who represented India at the United Nations and travelled by air. Several Indian Muslim women chose to travel for education, sometimes their own, or their husband's or sons'. There is Mehr-al-Nisa from Hyderabad who joined her doctor husband in Ohio to train as an x-ray nurse, and Zaib-un-Nisa from Karachi writing an account of her 60 days in America as a member of the U.S. Department of State-sponsored Foreign Leader Exchange Programme where she crosses the breadth of the United States in a hired car with her husband.

Safia Jabir Ali, daughter of the esteemed Tyabji clan, married Jabir Ali who travelled extensively for business from their home in Burma to Europe.

Her memoir, written in Urdu, is brimful with an easy confidence: "I had to travel by myself from Bombay to Marseilles, and that was the first time I had occasion to depend entirely on myself and spend more than three weeks among entire strangers. However, as probably some of you know by experience, on board the steamer, one gets to know people very soon. I was lucky in being able to travel on the Loyalty, the steamer of an Indian company where there were a good many Indian passengers, and some of us soon became great friends."

Connecting the dots

The last part, 'Travel as Obligation and Pleasure', has by far the most interesting experiences: Mughal Princess Jahanara's mystical meeting in Kashmir; Salamah Bint Said, a princess of Zanzibar, who flees her home to unite with her German lover in Hamburg, converts to Christianity and takes the name Emily Ruete; and Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain's pleasure trip to the Himalayas, among others.

While most women travelled with a male (husband, father, son, brother), some travelled alone: "Safia Jabir Ali travelled alone from Bombay to meet her husband in post-First World War Britain, Sediqeh Dowlatabadi from Tehran in 1923 to study at the Sorbonne in Paris, Selma Ekram from 'Stamboul' to New York in 1924 on the promise of work, Muhammadi Begum with her infant child from Bonn to Oxford in the mid-1930s, and Herawati Diah en route to study at Barnard College in New York in 1937."

Alone or chaperoned, veiled or unveiled, travelling for work or pleasure, these accounts by Muslim women bust every stereotype. In one voice, these women seem to be saying: "only connect".

Rakhshanda Jalil is a translator and literary historian.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

The first radio transmission across the Atlantic Ocean took place on December 12, 1901. Here is a quiz on the event that transformed perceptions of communication

Vighnesh P. Venkitesh

QUESTION 1
Who designed the transmission system and received the first signal?

QUESTION 2
Name the source and destination of the transmission?

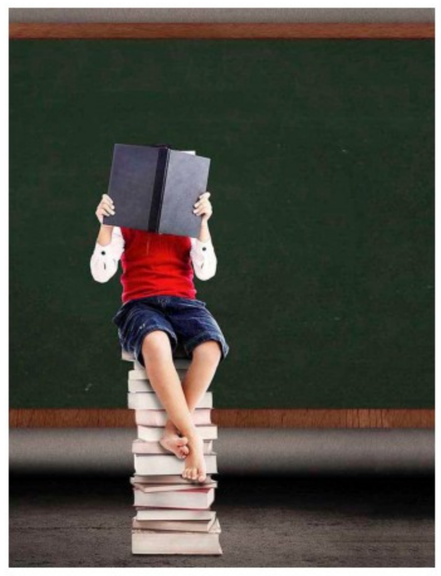
QUESTION 3
What was the transmitted message?

QUESTION 4
What did detractors believe would happen during the experiment?

QUESTION 5
Name the device invented by Edouard Branly that helped in transmitting long-range signals?

Visual question:
Name this German scientist who shared the Nobel Prize in Physics with the answer to question 1 for his contributions to wireless communication.

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. S.M. Krishna was Governor of this State. **Ans: Maharashtra**
2. S. M. Krishna was elected from this seat in Karnataka in 1962. **Ans: Maddur**
3. This task force was the brainchild of S.M. Krishna which ran from 1999 to 2004. **Ans: Bangalore Agenda Task Force**
4. This scheme designed to better the nutritional status of children was introduced in Karnataka when S.M. Krishna was Chief Minister. **Ans: Mid-day meal scheme**
5. Krishna's son-in-law passed away in 2019, and was the founder of this multinational food chain. **Ans: V.G. Siddhartha; Cafe Coffee Day**
Visual. The significance of this photo. **Ans: Film actor Dr. Rajkumar was kidnapped by forest brigand Veerappan**
Early Birds: Sonali Das| Tito Shiladitya| Siddhartha Viswanathan| Barnali Biswas| Lekshmy Harikumar



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subrahmanian Upendran

"... and If I do that, do you think it'll help my complexion?"

"It's not COMplexion, but comPLExion. The stress is on the second syllable and the 'o' of the first syllable is pronounced like the 'a' in 'China'."

"So 'com' is pronounced like the 'com' in words like 'complete', 'compel' and 'complain'. Is that right?"

"That's right."

"ComPLExion. Good. Now about my complexion. Do you think if I..."

"Don't ask me any mickey mouse questions."

"Mickey mouse question! What does it mean?'

"Mickey mouse means 'nonsense, trivial, time-wasting'. For example, I can say, the report was a lot of mickey mouse."

"Now getting back to my complexion, sorry comPLExion, I wonder ..."

"Let's change the channel."

"Change the channel? But the TV isn't on."

"I'm not talking about the TV I'm talking about you."

"You want me to change the channel. What does it mean?"

"You tell me."

"Well, when you change the channel of a TV set, you switch from one programme to another. So when you're talking about something and somebody asks you to change the channel, I suppose it means you are asked to change the topic."

"Excellent. To change the channel means 'to switch to some other topic of conversation'. Mohan is a difficult person to talk to because he keeps changing the channel frequently."

"That's true. So if I don't want him to keep changing the topic, can I say 'don't change the channel'?"

"Yes, you can. Now I definitely want you to change the channel."

" O.K. What do you plan to do during...No...what do you plan on doing.. I am always confused. Is it 'plan to do' or ' plan on doing'?"

"Both are correct. You can either say 'What do you plan on eating' or 'What do you plan to eat?'"

"I see. So, what do you plan to do this evening?"

"I don't plan on doing anything. Could you please pass me the portable hand-held communications inscriber?"

"Portable what?"

"The portable hand-held communications inscriber."

"What is that?"

"A pencil!"

"You're joking."

"No. That's what the U.S. army calls a pencil."

Published in The Hindu on May 17, 1994.

Word of the day

Sublimate:
the product of vapourisation of a solid; direct energy or urges into useful activities; make more subtle or refined; change or cause to change directly from a solid into a vapour without first melting; vapourise and then condense right back again

Synonyms: rarefy, subtilise

Usage: *I sublimated my grief by throwing myself into work.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/sublimatepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈsʌblɪmeɪt/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

‘Kempe Gowda opened eight gates of the city in 1537, and they have stayed open ever since’

Roopa Pai’s *Becoming Bangalore: Stories that Shaped a Hometown* will see a special launch at the Bangalore Literature Festival this weekend

Preeti Zachariah
BENGALURU

Illustrations used in the book. FROM BECOMING BANGALORE – COURTESY KORAVANJI APARANJI TRUST

FROM BECOMING BANGALORE – COURTESY KORAVANJI APARANJI TRUST

Roopa Pai was in her early teens when she first read *Gone with the Wind,* American journalist Margaret Mitchell’s only novel, rife with idyllic, if somewhat ahistorical and white-washed, imagery of the Antebellum South, portraying it as a great, fallen civilisation. One aspect of the book that struck her was the novel’s protagonist’s (Scarlett O’Hara) deep, abiding love for her family home, Tara, a love that keeps her going through some of the greatest losses, disasters and tragedies of her life.

“She would come home and pick up the red earth of Tara and say like, I’m home, and I can heal,” recalls Pai, the author of over 30 books and the co-founder of Bangalore Walks, a city-based history and heritage walks and tours company. ”For me, Bangalore has always been that place. I just have a very deep, positive connection to this city.”

It is this profound, unwavering love for the city, one that managed to survive Pai’s 12-year-long hiatus away from it in the early nineties when she lived in different cities and countries, that was funnelled in a column she began writing in February 2021. “It’s the first time I’ve written a column,” she says, recalling how the editor of a national daily reached out to her asking her to write this online column on Bengaluru back then. “I have never written a fortnightly column before, so it was a bit of a challenge. But it was a challenge I liked because it was about Bangalore,” says Pai, who promptly agreed to it.

Column to book

Now, four years and almost 100 columns later, Pai is all set to release her latest book, *Becoming Bangalore: Stories that Shaped a Hometown*, a collation of 75 of these columns, all centred on the city she has grown up in and is deeply passionate about. Dedicated to “the city that raised me, and to everyone who believes in the singular power of curiosity, collaboration, and a capaciousness of mind and heart in building inspiring communities, cities and countries,” as the foreword puts it, *Becoming Bangalore* is a delightful 300-odd page paean to Bengaluru, dipping and diving into stories, facts (and sometimes popular factoids), history, mythologies and memories of the city.

The conversion of these columns, published online, into a book happened rather serendipitously, going by Pai’s account. “I am a computer engineer, but I haven’t got around to enjoying reading on the web,” she says, with a laugh.”I’m traditional. I like books.” She had been toying with the idea of converting these online columns for a while, she says, even contemplating self-publishing “because I didn’t think a mainstream publisher would be interested in bringing out a set of columns on Bangalore” until she casually mentioned this to Thomas Abraham, MD, Hachette India in mid-2023, by which time around 60 columns had been published. That was how the idea of a book was born. *Becoming Bangalore*, edited by Vatsala Kaul-Banerjee of Hachette India and illustrated by Priya Kuriyan (“I think of us a dream team,” says Pai), is all set to be formally released on 17 January, 2025. There will also be a special launch at the 13th edition of the Bangalore Literature Festival, where Pai will be in conversation with Atta Galatta co-founder Subodh Sankar on 15 December.

Becoming Bangalore is filled with delightful stories from the city’s glorious past, connecting it seamlessly to contemporary times, likely altering the way any inhabitant of Bengaluru will relate to the city.

For instance, did you know that Kempe Gowda, the founder of modern Bengaluru, was a chieftain under the Vijayanagara Empire whose capital Hampi was once “the biggest city in the world after Beijing.”? Or have you ever wondered how a city plumb in the middle of the dry, arid Deccan Plateau is so full of trees that it has earned the sobriquet “garden city”? Also, why does a statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji continue to reign over Bhashyam Circle by the Sankey Tank, and what is the connection between the last ruling Maharaja of Mysore, Jayachamarajendra Wadiyar, and the German composer Richard Strauss?

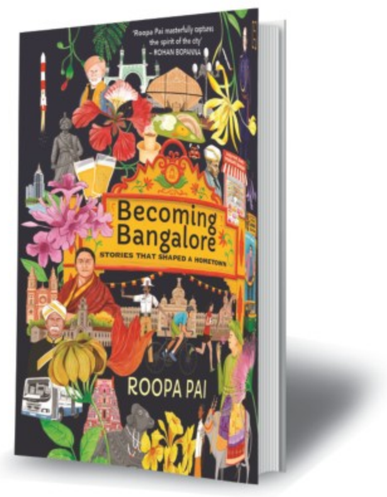
Roopa Pai

In four sections

This book, which is divided into four major sections, each named after some of the city’s popular flowers, Gulmohar, Champaka, African Tulip and Pink Trumpet, offers answers to these questions, constantly reiterating the global outlook, innovative nature and inherent cosmopolitism of the city that Pai thinks of as the spirit of Bengaluru.

Despite the flak that the city has garnered on social media in the recent past, at its core, it is and has always been a “charmed little bubble of a place where any language, any culture” has been allowed to exist, where collaboration and the ubiquitous “adjust madi” is as deeply entrenched in the soil of the city as the roots of the trees, both native and exotic, that line its streets and avenue.

“I wanted to make that point that this has always been a city that has welcomed people from outside. Bangalore-ness is about absorbing, assimilating and welcoming,” says Pai. “Kempe Gowda opened the eight gates of Bangalore in 1537, and they have stayed open ever since.”



Becoming Bangalore book cover. HACHETTE INDIA

She firmly believes that this inclusive attitude towards migrants has only enriched the city and will continue to. “The largest, grandest cities of the world have always been melting pots... if you give people soil to grow, it can only enrich the garden,” she says, pointing out that Bengaluru’s location, at the edge of Karnataka, closer to Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala, has played a significant role in making the city “a place where people from everywhere came, assimilated and learnt to work with each other peacefully.”

Creating the book

Becoming Bangalore is the latest in a series of books focusing on the city, which include *Askew: A Short Biography of Bangalore* by T.J.S. George, *Nature in the City: Bengaluru in the Past, Present, and Future* by Harini Nagendra, *The Promise of the Metropolis: Bangalore’s Twentieth Century* by Janaki Nair, *Namma Bangalore: The Soul of a Metropolis* by Shoba Narayan and *Past and Curious* by Stanley Carvalho. “I feel like the city has reached some kind of critical mass. There are people doing a lot here, thinking about it a lot,” says Pai, who believes that this is also because the city is maturing into a kind of thought leader “not just for India but also for the world,” she says.

Additionally, the city has, over the years, developed multiple subcultures and “people of every subculture want representation and recognition,” she says. “There cannot be a monolithic Bangalore...there’s enough of a population, diversity and pluralism now here,” argues Pai, adding that though the lenses through which these various writers see the city are different, all these different stories come from a place of love, exploration and feeling of ownership.

Unlike many old-time Bengalureans, whose narrative of Bengaluru is often tinctured with regret and longing about the city it once was, Pai is refreshingly positive about its future. “I know of people who feel that some golden Utopia has gone away, and it often makes them sad or bitter,” she says. “But I think the city is still glorious.” While not discounting the problems besieging the city–traffic, pollution, overcrowding, potholes and so on –she thinks of it as “birthing pains. You have to go through this last bit when you mature from a small town to a true metropolis.”

Still the best

After all, while lovely, small towns cannot retain their people, says Pai. “People leave small towns to go and work somewhere else,” she says. “It broke my heart to have to leave my city, but I also had to go because I felt it was too small to hold me.” In her opinion, Bengaluru has only gotten better and will continue to attract the best minds and people to it because “it has retained its small town flavour of warmth and gentility and everything. But it also now offers opportunities so people don’t have to leave,” she says.

Amex launches Vasundhara to support environmental sustainability

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The project includes key features such as restoring urban and peri-urban ecosystems, adaptive climate measures, and energy-efficient solution.

American Express, in collaboration with NGO Safe Water Network, has launched Vasundhara, a three-year initiative aimed at advancing environmental sustainability, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience in Bengaluru and Gurugram.

According to Sanjay Khanna, Country Manager, American Express, creating a positive impact on communities over dedication to climate resilience and sustainable ecosystem is what project Vasundhara meant for.

The project includes key features such as restoring urban and peri-urban ecosystems, adaptive climate measures, and energy-efficient solutions. The programme would also include community engagement through livelihood-based eco-restoration opportunities, mainly for women, as per the company.

Programme Vasundhara targets a reach of over a million people across 85 villages in the two cities, Bengaluru and Gurugram. Objectives include conserving approximately 710 million liters of water, planting 15,000 trees, and restoring 24,500 acres of land by 2027.

Additionally, the programme supports renewable energy integration and trains over 900 female entrepreneurs to establish sustainable agriculture enterprises, connecting them with financial institutions for support.

“Vasundhara aims to serve as a model for corporate-supported conservation efforts that contribute to India’s sustainability and climate resilience objectives,” added Khanna.

Mercedes-Benz Research develops course material on safety for college students

According to a research, accident investigations in India showed that 95% of drivers and front passengers who used seat belts were uninjured, revealing the power of passive safety systems

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

(From left) Manu Saale, Managing Director and CEO of Mercedes-Benz Research and Development India and Dr. H.S. Nagaraja, Chief Mentor of Prayoga Institute of Education Research. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Bengaluru-based Mercedes-Benz Research and Development India (MBRDI), the largest research and development centre for Mercedes-Benz Group AG outside Germany, on Wednesday launched Sustainability Garage, a Mercedes-Benz initiative, for promoting innovation in sustainable mobility, here in the city.

In association with Prayoga Institute of Education Research, the Sustainability Garage, equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, would serve as a hub for multidisciplinary research, focusing on developing eco-friendly materials with diverse applications to benefit society, said MBRDI.

Under this initiative, MBRDI has jointly developed specialised course material, and over 150 students from six universities in Karnataka including Jain University, R.V. Institution, JSS Science and Technology University, Vijaya College, Nrupatunga Institution, and St. Joseph’s University.

Manu Saale, Managing Director and CEO of Mercedes-Benz Research and Development India, said, “Researchers at MBRDI are deeply engaged in ensuring sustainability as a core priority - from analysing materials to design greener products or better battery chemistry to pivoting increasingly towards digital engineering processes that reduce emissions or waste.‘‘

In addition to partnerships with academia and research labs that help multiply MBRDI’s innovation quotient, it was important for the industry to create an ecosystem that nurtured innovation and embraced the principles of circularity and sustainability, he said.

According to research conducted by MBRDI, accident investigations in India showed that 95% of drivers and front passengers who used seat belts were uninjured, revealing the power of passive safety systems. Mercedes-Benz’s Accident Research has been conducting SAFE ROADS India awareness in the last 10 years.

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 12, 1974

Development Projects for Small Farmers

Bangalore, Dec. 11: The development projects undertaken by the Small Farmers’ Development Agency (SFDA) have come as a boon to the farmers of Byramangala and the surrounding villages in the Ramanagaram taluk of Bangalore district.

Besides sugarcane cultivation, progress has been particularly noticeable in the field of animal husbandry in the villages. Taking advantage of the proximity of their village to Bangalore (about 40 km), the villagers have taken to rearing cross bred cattle. The milk is being supplied to the Bangalore dairy.

The Byramangala Multi-purpose Cooperative Society covers three surrounding villages also -- Hosur, Kanchugaranahalli and Gopalli.

CM’s Tribute to YMCA’s work

Mangalore, Dec. 11: The Chief Minister, Mr. Devaraj Urs, on Monday praised the excellent work being done by the Young Men’s Christian Association in India for bringing together youth for creative and constructive work and promoting understanding, goodwill and better human relationship.

Inaugurating a Rs. 6 lakh working men’s hostel being built by the local YMCA unit, Mr. Urs said the YMCA had a bigger role to play in organising youth on right lines and should have a membership of more than 25 lakhs and not merely 25,000 at present. He advised youth not to fall prey to political agitations and be misled by misguided leadership, but have faith in organisations like the YMCA and take part in nation building work.

Fancy footwork World Dance comes to Bengaluru this weekend. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Movement and meaning

Attakkalari's 'World Dance' in Bengaluru is a fusion of global and local stories

Praveen Sudevan

In an age when conversations about climate change, migration, and identity often play out in boardrooms and on social media, Attakkalari's *World Dance* invites audiences to consider these themes in a visceral, physical medium: contemporary dance.

From December 12 to 14, Bengaluru's Freedom Park will become a stage for global narratives, brought to life by an eclectic lineup of performers.

Curated by Attakkalari's artistic director, Jayachandran Palazhy, the program blends local traditions with international influences, offering a sensory and cerebral experience.

For Jayachandran, dance is not just an art form; it is a reflection of our times.

"The overarching theme is about talking about our times – especially the climate emergency, environmental concerns, migrations, and war," he explains. *World Dance* features performances from Italy, Japan, and the United States alongside Indian artists, creating what Jayachandran calls "different kinds of physical articulations of our time."

The lineup includes three key performances: *Sonnet of Samsara*, *Folios of Time*, and *That's All Folks!* – each distinct in its vision yet unified by a shared ambition to push the boundaries of contemporary dance.

Sonnet of Samsara

A sprawling, site-specific work, *Sonnet of Samsara* is set to animate Freedom Park with a blend of rituals, myths, and stylised abstractions. Drawing inspiration from the sublime – the ineffable experiences that words fail to capture – this performance channels the energy of its location.

"It's about the rituals and myths as a kind of other side of dreams," Jayachandran explains. "It represents, in a metaphorical way, what each one of us is going through." The performance incorporates elements of Indian traditions, from Mizhavu drums of Sanskrit theatre to martial arts like Kalari Payattu.

Live music plays a significant role, with vocalist MD Pallavi accompanied by Japanese electro-acoustic artist Kunihiko Matsuo. Colourful, hand-painted silk flags from the *Beach of Dreams* project by London-based Kinetika Design Studio will form the backdrop. Created through workshops with communities, these flags tell stories of trials, tribulations, and aspirations.

Folios of Time

If *Sonnet of Samsara* connects to the past through ritual and myth, *Folios of Time* looks firmly at the present.

It touches the topics of environment, climate emergencies, wars, migration, displacements, existential dilemmas, gender issues, and more.

"While recognising the difficulties humanity faces today, any attempt to offer hope for individuals in building inclusive communities where diversity, tolerance, care for the environment, and sustainable practices is nurtured, needs to be celebrated," says Jayachandran.

The six selected choreographers – Gayatri Shetty, Harshal Vyas, Pallavi Verma, R Chandiran, R Sai, and Sehere Noor Mehra – were invited for an intense choreography residency in Bengaluru mentored by two acclaimed Italian artists – choreographer Damiano Ottavio Bigi and dramaturge Alessandra Paoletti.

The six choreographers, who were selected from 87 applications, form a collective narrative examining our times' fragmented realities.

That's All Folks!

That's All Folks! is the second chapter in a trilogy by COMPANY Bigi Paoletti that combines dance, science, and myth. While its predecessor, Un Discreto Protagonista, dealt with the origin of the universe, and the physical and astronomical processes involved, *That's All Folks!* explores the relationship between man and the cosmos with a quartet of international performers consisting of Damiano Ottavio Bigi, Ching-Ying Chien, Issue Park, and Faith Prendergast. Premiered at Equilibrio Festival 2024, *That's All Folks!* is inspired by the concept of event horizon – a boundary in spacetime, typically associated with a black hole, beyond which nothing can escape. It represents the "point of no return." "It's a very special production," says Jayachandran.

"Damiano has also worked with Dimitris Papaioannou, known for his choreography for the Greek Olympics. This piece brings together elements from those rich traditions."

Awarded Best Production in Italy, *That's All Folks!* "is about the sublime connection between us and the universe," says Jayachandran.

Dance for all

Despite its ambitious scope, *World Dance* also aims to reach audiences who may not be familiar with contemporary dance. Performing under the umbrella of BLR Hubba, the festival promises a welcoming entry point for newcomers.

"This is a unique opportunity for new audiences," says Jayachandran.

"For example, while the Mizhavu drums have a soul-stirring quality, the Kalari Payattu perfiormance s electrifying to watch. Even if you are new to contemporary dance, these elements will draw you in."

To those who feel intimidated by the abstract nature of the art form, he offers reassurance: "It's like tasting sushi for the first time. You might not understand it immediately, but with an open mind, you'll find a sensorial narrative that speaks to you."

For him, dance is more than performance – it's a tool for personal and societal transformation.

"Dance addresses the fragmentation of the self in contemporary times," he says.

"It helps us relate to our bodies, to others, and to the environment."

Catch That's All Folks! *at Bangalore International Centre on December 12 (7.30-8.30pm),* Sonnet of Samsara *at Freedom Park on December 13 (6.30pm), and* Folios of Time *at Rangamandala, Attakkalari, on December 14 (10am -12.30pm).*

CITYBEATS

Dance debut

DECEMBER 14
Govardhani Ethirajan, a student of Raksha Karthik, will present her Bharatanatyam Rangapravesha. She will showcase the intricacies of the dance form in the presence of chief guests Venkatesha Lakshmana, managing director, EKS Intecindia Pvt. Ltd. and AV Satyanarayanan, founder of Srishti Centre for Performing Arts.
At Yuvapatha, 5pm.

Down the ages

ONGOING
Paakashala has introduced a range of vegetarian cuisines this festive season. These dishes have been prepared from recipes passed down through generations and celebrate the essence of our culture with authentic flavours from the many regions of the country.
This menu is available across all Paakashaala outlets.

From up north

ONGOING
This menu offers you Northern India's heritage cuisine, paying homage to regional flavours and includes dishes such as *dahi kraal, burni ka jhinga, wari* spiced *sigdi macchi, gosht reshiya kebab* and *cha gosht* from Himachal Pradesh.
Priced at ₹3500 plus taxes per person, at Loya, Taj West End. Call 66605660.

Death metal and ageless classics

Anurag Tagat

Bangalore Death Fest

December 15, 6 pm onwards
Fandom at Gilly's Redefined, Koramangala
Entry: ₹1,899 via Insider.in, plus ₹500 cover charge at the door

The second edition of Bangalore Death Fest – put together by longstanding gig organisers Extreme Underground India – will mark the India debut of death metal veterans Malevolent Creation, alongside Chennai band Moral Putrefaction, Virodh featuring members from Bengaluru, Assam and Sikkim, plus Darjeeling technical death metal band Obliterating Vortex.

Malevolent Creation – who have been around since the mid-1980s and synonymous with pioneering death metal – will stop by India as the final show on their Asia tour. The band's vocalist and bassist Jesse Jolly says while he is not familiar with bands from India, he says he is "personally excited to visit Bangalore and get a taste of it".

I Built The Sky, YogiEatsProg

December 13, 7:30 pm onwards
Fandom At Gilly's Redefined, Koramangala
Entry: ₹1,499 via Insider.in, plus ₹500 cover charge at the door

After making their India debut in December last year at the NH7 Weekender festival in Pune, Australian band I Built The Sky will be back in the country for two shows. While they already performed a headline set at The Hills Festival in Meghalaya, the instrumental progressive rock/metal band led by Rohan Stevenson will make their way to Bengaluru to cover even more ground.

The artiste says in a post on Instagram, "This Friday, December 13th, me and the gang are playing one final show In India. Going the extra mile and bringing a full set of tunes from *The Sky Is Not The Limit, Coalesce EP, The Zenith Rise, The Quiet Place Away* AND MORE and with support from the amazingly talented Yogi Eats Prog."

Magnetic Music 03 Edition

December 13 and 14, 8 pm onwards
ZLB23, A Kyoto Speakeasy, The Leela Palace, Old Airport Road
Entry: Via WhatsApp message to Zia + 91 -9632060433

The third season of ZLB23 brings a whole different lineup to the now-famous speakeasy housed within The Leela Palace. This time around, an entire week of music programming is planned around local artistes paying tribute to some of the world's most cherished musicians.

To kick things off, the Kishan Baalaji Collective aka KBC will pay tribute to British pop-rock favourites Coldplay (who are themselves India-bound in January) on December 13, followed by a set that features songs by British rock icons Deep Purple and Led Zeppelin.

Ibsen comes to town

Shilpa Anandraj

Collaboration for every season Ila Arun (right) on stage with KK Raina. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Surnai theatre and Folk Arts Foundation will stage the Hindi play *Ajaatshatru* in Bengaluru this weekend.

The play, written by singer-actor-writer Ila Arun, is an adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*. The play is jointly directed by actor KK Raina and Ila.

The play deals with the issue of water contamination and its effect on the inhabitants of the fictitious town of Sonpur.

It is a play within a play starting with a folk play emphasising the tenets of the five elements – earth air, water, fire and space.

Ila founded Surna in 1982 with the twin objectives of promoting theatre and folk arts of India. It became a charitable trust 'Surnai Theatre And Folk Arts Foundation in 2015 .

Raina, a television and theatre actor, and award-winning script writer, is known for his realistic portrayals in films including *Ek Ruka Hua Faisla* and *Byomkesh Bakshi*. He talks about theatre, people, pollution and personal choices.

Edited excerpts

'Ajaatashatru' means one who has no enemies, but the play is an adaptation of Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*. Is there a pun intended?

The credit for this goes to Ila. *Ajaatashatru* does mean one without enemies. Ibsen wrote *An Enemy of the people* in 1882. At that time as he concentrated on what was important at that point of time, the contaminants of water baths.

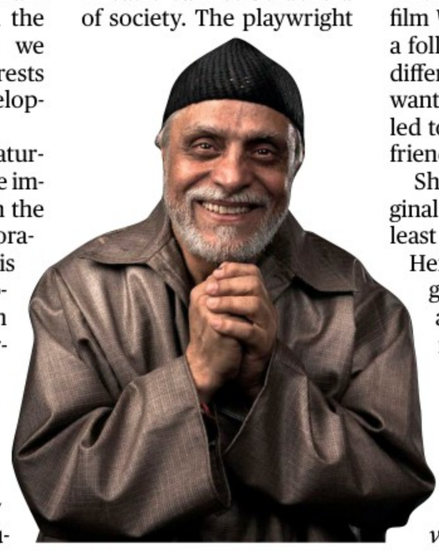
Ila's adaptation talks about current issues of environmental pollution. The question is who is polluting the water bodies, beaches or the land? We talk about progress, but it cannot be mindless. Today, one rain leads to landslides in the mountains, because we have cut down the forests in the name of development and progress.

During Ganesh Chaturthi in Mumbai, idols are immersed in the sea with the flowers and the decorative paraphernalia. This pollutes the sea. However, idol immersion is not done by one person, but by all of us.

Ajaatashatru says we are our own enemies. We need to be conscious about the choices we make today so we can leave a beautiful environment for the future generation.

You spoke about worrying about the length of a play, but theatre is known to be bold about its every aspect, irrespective of how the audience reacts to it? Or has that aspect of theatre changed?

Theatre cannot be devoid of society. The playwright looks at the society and writes about it. He questions society and gives hints about where it is going wrong. That is his take and it is up to the audience, how they react to this.



Theatre is also a pillar of the society. People think theatre happens on stage. It is not so. Theatre happens in the minds of the audience. While they watch a play, the churning that happens in their minds is theatre. It forces them to think and question. If theatre fails to do so then it loses its essence of being theatre.

Tell us about your experience of working with Ila Arun.

I am lucky to work with her. I met her 40 years ago when I was working on the film *Vijeyta*. She was doing a folk play and it was very different. I told her that I wanted to join her and that led to these many years of friendship.

She has written five original plays and adapted atleast eight of Ibsen's plays. Her adaptations are so good that you feel it is an original. It is deeply rooted in our culture.

At Ranga Shankara, on December 15, 3.30pm and 7.30pm. Tickets are available on 111.bookmyshow.com and in the venue.

INBRIEF

Allu Arjun moves HC to quash FIR regarding woman's death

Actor Allu Arjun on Wednesday approached the Telangana High Court seeking to quash an FIR registered against him in connection with the death of a woman caught in the crowd during the premiere of his movie *Pushpa 2* in Hyderabad. On December 5, the city police registered a case against the actor, his security team, and the theatre management under Sections 105 and 118 (1) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita based on a complaint lodged by the deceased woman's family. The High Court is expected to hear the matter in the coming days.

The actor had earlier announced financial assistance of Rs 25 lakh to the family of the deceased woman. PTI

Will develop Amaravati in three years, A.P. govt. tells SC

Amaravati has been 'firmly concluded' as capital, State says in an affidavit filed in top court; as per the promises made to people, State govt. will comply with HC judgment of March 3, 2022, it adds

V. Raghavendra
VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh government has filed an affidavit in the Supreme Court stating that it has 'firmly concluded' Amaravati as the State capital. It has said that it was taking up development activity as per the extant master plan, with a target to complete it in three years.

Chief Secretary Neerabh Kumar Prasad said in the affidavit that taking into account the current situation with regard to the promises made to people, especially the stakeholders of the Land Pooling Scheme, it has decided to comply with a High Court judgment of March 3, 2022.

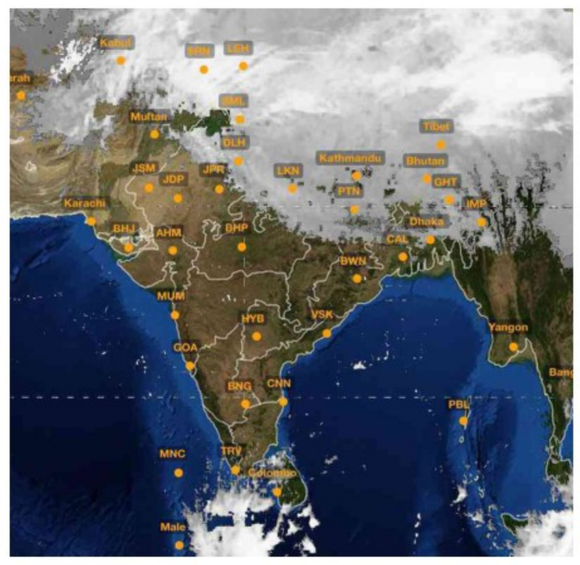
Capital issue: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu inspecting a waterbody in Amaravati. FILE PHOTO

The officer said that the government would, as per the development agreement, continue with and complete the construction of a single Capital located at Amaravati with offices of the State's three civic wings in terms of the master plan notified on February 26, 2016.

By undertaking to comply with any directions from the top court, Mr. Prasad prayed for the disposal of the special leave petitions filed in the matter. Amaravati was envisioned not only as an administrative city but also as an economic hub comprising 27 townships of 1,000 acres each within the capital city.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam, Rayalaseema, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Karnataka, Kerala and Mahe. Cold wave conditions likely in isolated pockets of Haryana, Chandigarh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Saurashtra & Kutch

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	24.4	13.5	Kozhikode	—	34.2	25.8
Ahmedabad	—	27.0	13.4	Kurnool	—	33.0	21.6
Aizawl	—	23.7	11.4	Lucknow	—	24.0	6.6
Allahabad	—	25.8	8.0	Madurai	—	30.0	23.6
Bengaluru	—	25.9	19.2	Mangaluru	—	32.8	23.8
Bhopal	—	23.4	6.9	Mumbai	—	35.6	20.0
Bhubaneswar	—	28.1	18.2	Mysuru	—	27.0	19.4
Chandigarh	—	23.1	6.0	New Delhi	—	23.0	4.9
Chennai	9.1	28.1	26.1	Patna	—	23.6	12.4
Coimbatore	—	30.2	22.0	Port Blair	0.2	31.2	24.6
Dehradun	—	24.8	4.8	Puducherry	19	24.6	23.8
Gangtok	—	12.0	6.7	Pune	—	32.0	17.4
Goa	—	35.0	24.0	Raipur	—	28.1	13.2
Guwahati	—	24.6	12.5	Ranchi	—	22.2	9.5
Hubballi	—	30.0	18.0	Shillong	—	16.0	5.7
Hyderabad	—	29.3	17.7	Shimla	—	19.8	4.2
Imphal	—	22.1	6.1	Srinagar	—	8.8	-3.0
Jaipur	—	24.5	8.0	Thiruvananthapuram	—	33.8	24.6
Kochi	—	32.8	24.6	Tiruchi	1	27.5	24.6
Kohima	—	16.8	6.6	Vijayawada	—	30.0	23.7
Kolkata	—	24.4	14.3	Visakhapatnam	—	28.4	24.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.18	..38	37	... 240	...131	
Bengaluru	...6	..15	64	 80	...111	
Chennai	.16	..30	89	 48	61	
Delhi	.14	..54	37	... 264	...284	
Hyderabad	...6	121	52	... 150	...153	
Kolkata	.14	..46	52	... 200	...146	
Lucknow	.13	3	46	... 216	...140	
Mumbai	.23	..98	36	... 150	...156	
Pune	..—	139	95	... 223	...146	
Visakhapatnam	...7	..37	43	... 163	...113	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Durgapur, West Bengal recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 347 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Kancheepuram, Tamil Nadu recorded a healthy AQI score of 27

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Karnataka HC stays probe into case against Malayalam director for sexually assaulting actor

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka has stayed the investigation into the case registered against Malayam film director Ranjith Balakrishnan on the allegation of sexually assaulting an aspiring male actor in December 2012 in a room at a hotel situated near Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru.

Not exisiting

The court noted that the five-start hotel, where the alleged crime is said to have been committed, was not even existing in 2012.

"The complaint on the face of it, is false. I don't even say *prima facie*, as the Taj hotel near the international airport started its operation only in 2016, this is in the public domain, that is four years after the incident. Therefore, the vivid narration at Taj hotel is absolutely false. This is thus a canard," Justice M. Nagaprasanna observed in the interim order.

Interim order

The court passed the interim order on a petition filed by Mr. Ranjith, 60, who had questioned the first information report, registered by the city police on October 26, 2024, on its transfer to Bengaluru by the Kerala State police before whom the victim had lodged the complaint earlier.

12 years

"The complaint is registered in 2024 and the alleged incident is said to have happened in 2012. Therefore, it has taken 12 years for the complainant to register the complaint. The delay of 12 years is also left completely unexplained. Therefore, on all these factors it becomes a classic case of *falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus* (false in one thing, false in everything)," the court observed.

It was alleged in the complaint that the petitioner-director had called the complainant-actor to come to a room on the fourth floor of the hotel in December 2012, where the petitioner had sexually abused him.

It was also alleged that the petitioner-director took his nude photographs and sent them an actress in Kerala.

Malicious intention

However, it was contended in the petition that the allegations against the petitioner were baseless and concocted with *mala fide* intention of maliciously implicating the petitioner. It was also pointed out in the petition that the Taj hotel was inaugurated in December 2015, and became operational in early 2016.

The petitioner-director was booked under Section 377 (carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal) of the Indian Penal Code, and under the provisions of the Information Technology Act, 2000.

A wide aisle

Parliament must remain the forum for airing the views of all representatives

In a move that is unprecedented in India's parliamentary history, 60 Members of the Rajya Sabha have expressed a loss of confidence in the Chairman, Jagdeep Dhankhar, who is also the Vice-President of India. These Members of Parliament, from the Opposition, have given notice for a resolution seeking his removal from office. The resolution is unlikely to face a vote, and will be defeated if it does. But that is beside the point. What is real and damaging for democracy is the trust deficit between the Chair and the Opposition members. Mr. Dhankhar's rulings and his public statements have been cited by the Opposition as proof of his partisanship. Mr. Dhankhar's decision to allow Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MPs to speak on the subject of an adjournment motion that he himself had rejected on December 9 was the final trigger for the extreme step by the Opposition. These members also see, among other things, a pattern of the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge, being disallowed to speak, and Mr. Dhankhar publicly amplifying views of the government and berating those of the Opposition. Most often, it is career politicians who are elected, through a partisan contest, to supposedly apolitical positions such as President, Vice-President and Speaker of the Lok Sabha. Once in office, they largely stay above the fray. Hence, the notice for a no-confidence motion against the Rajya Sabha Chairman marks an unfortunate turn for democracy.

It is no coincidence that all this comes against the backdrop of a constant campaign by the BJP to shrink the Opposition space. Criticism of the government is portrayed as an anti-national act, and institutions and individuals are often targeted through insinuations. There is little engagement between the BJP and the Opposition. If Parliament merely becomes yet another platform for political diatribe, it will erode rather than reinforce democracy. The message from parliamentary proceedings to the citizenry should be that the government is sensitive to their voices. The government's defence of Mr. Dhankhar included a reference to his caste, and condemnation of the principal Opposition party, with the insinuation that it was anti-India. While the government gets its way by virtue of its majority, the Opposition must have its say. When Parliament is held hostage to hostility between the government and the Opposition, the Chair is expected to mediate and find a way forward. This role of the Chair is possible only when its occupant is neutral and seen as such. Regardless of the merit of the grievances, the Chairman could take a proactive approach to reassure his critics that he is above the political fray for the sake of institutional integrity.

Bench and bigotry

High Court judge's remarks on minorities require a stern response

Political affiliations are seldom considered a disqualification to hold judicial office, but there is no doubt that open bigotry should be one. The controversial remarks of Justice Shekhar Kumar Yadav of the Allahabad High Court, including an unacceptable slur against the Muslim community, at an event organised by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) cast a shadow on his impartiality as a judge, if not his suitability to remain in office. Justice Yadav observed ominously that "this is India and it will be run as per the wishes of its majority". It was clear from the context of a Hindu-Muslim dichotomy that he was speaking about, that he was not referring to a governing majority in a democracy, but the sort of numerical superiority that would give the larger group the final word on how the country is run. The judge also sought to compare Hindu and Muslim children and comment on how Hindus learn kindness and tolerance, while Muslims purportedly do not because they witness the slaughter of animals. He is previously known to have observed that the cow is the only animal that inhales and exhales oxygen and made remarks against conversion. It is a welcome development that the Supreme Court of India has taken note of reports highlighting Justice Yadav's remarks and asked for details from the High Court. It is too early to speculate whether there will be an in-house inquiry, or a response to calls for his removal, but it is quite certain that the judge's conduct and functioning will come under justified scrutiny.

Even though the event was a discussion on the need for a Uniform Civil Code, it was not an ideal stage for a meaningful debate. The VHP is an aggressive proponent of a Hindu majoritarian view, responsible for spearheading a violent movement for demolishing the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya and installing a Ram temple in its place, and an organisation that has been banned in the past for fomenting riots, discord and much bloodshed. It was quite obvious that the forum would be more inclined to assail minorities than extol the virtues of a uniform law for civil matters. Judges of constitutional courts are not expected to grace the platform provided by such groups. It is regrettable that the judge forgot the ethical principles that bind the higher judiciary. In 1997, the Supreme Court had adopted a 'Restatement of Values of Judicial Life', a set of guidelines under which the behaviours and conduct of members of the higher judiciary must reaffirm the people's faith in the institution's impartiality and any act that erodes such a perception should be avoided. While lapses from such principles are not rare, Justice Yadav presents a rather glaring example.

The long and complex road to assisted dying

Suhrith Parthasarathy

an advocate practising in the Madras High Court

On November 29, 2024, while introducing the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill 2024-25 (The Assisted Dying Law) to the British House of Commons, the Member of Parliament, Kim Leadbeater told a rather distressing story of an "agonising death".

A 47-year-old music teacher with a young son, Ms. Leadbeater said, had suffered from bile duct cancer which obstructed his bowel. On his last day, this saw him vomit faecal matter for five consecutive hours, before he choked and died. The vomiting was so violent that he could not be sedated and, what is worse, he had stayed conscious through the ordeal. All the while, his wife pleaded with doctors to help. But the physicians treating him were helpless. The look of horror on his face as he died, his family say, is something that will never leave them.

Ms. Leadbeater narrated the teacher's case to illustrate the suffering that many others face from deadly illnesses, with no choice available to them to seek assistance in ending their pain. The draft law – which gives terminally-ill adults (in England and Wales), with less than six months to live, the right to die, once they have a request signed off by two doctors and a high court judge – was intensely debated. Eventually, the Bill was passed with a majority of 55 votes, with 330 members voting for it and 275 against.

In somewhat unusual circumstances, the Members of Parliament had been released from the tethers imposed on them by their party whips. They had been asked to decide as their conscience willed. As a result, what ensued was all manners of interesting voting patterns. Prime Minister Keir Starmer and his Conservative predecessor Rishi Sunak voted in favour. The Deputy Prime Minister, Angela Rayner, and the Health Secretary, Wes Streeting, rejected the draft.

The complexity of the issue

With its passing in the Commons, the proposal is now slated for review by a Public Bill Committee, which will scrutinise, fine tune, and suggest amendments to its various clauses, before it returns the draft to Parliament for an ultimate sanction. Therefore, there is still some way to go. But seeing how previous efforts, to bring about a law to allow assisted dying, have floundered, the Bill's passing represents a milestone, a victory for those who consider the right to die, when faced with an intolerable ailment, as intrinsic to human liberty.

At the same time, the sharply divergent views expressed amongst lawmakers in Britain also shows us just how complex an issue this is. The debates contain in them lessons that the rest of the world can take, in deciding how best to allow people to both lead, and end, their lives, with dignity and compassion.

> The intricacies involved — as the debate in the United Kingdom shows — should not detract from the fact that this is also an issue linked to dignity and the alleviation of suffering

The opposition to the law primarily rests on two planks. First, opponents argue that the law is premised on a "slippery slope" – that it would be practically impossible to draw boundaries limiting the right to assisted death, and that the old and the disabled might be pressured into choosing to end their lives in the midst of fears that they might wind up becoming a burden on their loved ones.

Critics also claim that a similar law employed in Canada has produced worrying results. Originally, following a 2015 judgment of the country's Supreme Court, the government opened up avenues to allow assisted dying for those whose death was "reasonably foreseeable". But the law has since been expanded through judicial interpretation to make it applicable even to those facing a "grievous and irremediable medical condition". In so doing, the bright lines of the rule, the Bill's detractors say, have been dimmed.

'There are legitimate cases'

Proponents of the law counter the criticism by pointing to how the very invocation of a slippery slope suggests that those making the argument are offering a concession: that there are legitimate cases where it might be justifiable to help someone die. Moreover, the law, as drafted, they say, is carefully tailored: it only includes adults competent to make decisions, who are ailing from a terminal diagnosis and who have less than six months to live, to seek assistance in ending their lives.

Additionally, the person making the claim will be independently assessed by two doctors, with a 14-day reflection time afforded to them, and no decision will be sanctioned without the High Court's approval. Lord David Neuberger, the former President of the U.K. Supreme Court, argues that the Bill's clauses are tightly worded enough to ensure that the law respects people's right of personal autonomy, and that there really is no chance of its scope being enlarged through judicial challenge.

The second cause for opposition stems from rather more traditional, philosophical grounds, sometimes resting on considerations of religion and faith. The proposed law, these critics claim, is simply deceit disguised as compassion, and offends the inviolability of the right to life. In response, the Bill's supporters concede that in most cases, there ought to be serious objections to the taking of one's life, and to avoidably allowing people to die. In ordinary circumstances, objections founded on a person's right to life would prevail. But the conflict here, as they demonstrate, is not especially irreconcilable. For, as Ms. Leadbeater and others have shown, the moral background in which the debate resides cannot permit a wholesale embargo on physician-assisted deaths. After all, every adult, we generally recognise, has the right to make significant decisions on how best to lead their respective lives. This freedom, grounded in the sovereignty of our bodies, may stem from religious faith or simply from conscience, but, regardless, it is something that is embedded in each of us as human beings.

The state, no doubt, owes to us a duty to ensure that we do not indulge in what Ronald Dworkin described as "irrevocable acts of self-destruction". But, equally, the exercise of this duty can under no circumstances "justify forcing a competent dying patient to live in agony a few weeks longer". To do so would impinge squarely on the freedom that each of us enjoys over our lives and bodies.

On choice and dignity

In many ways, the debates in Britain assume universal value. In India, the Supreme Court has previously recognised a limited freedom to die, a right both to passive euthanasia and a right to make an "advance medical directive" – that is a liberty to stipulate one's preferences for medical treatment, or the withdrawal thereof, should one become incapacitated in the future. In its judgment in *Common Cause (A Regd. Society) vs Union of India* (2018), the Court found this right as essential to liberty, as "an element of the privacy of the being".

The road from here to assisted dying is clearly a long one. But the reasons which compel one to hold in favour of individual dignity surely apply just as vigorously to how one might want to go about dealing with a terminal illness in their last days. The latter choice is as critical to one's dignity and independence as it is to any other decision that a person makes over her body and life.

Deliberations made in Britain's Parliament have shown us that making laws to govern assisted dying is a complicated affair. But the mere prospect of a slippery slope, or the possibility of abuse, cannot detract from the fact that at stake here is something central to human dignity – that is, the ability to allow people to make conscious choices to alleviate the most crushing forms of pain and suffering.

One can argue over the fine print of what a law that allows for assisted dying must contain. But there can be no doubt that the rudimentary principle on which such a legislation will inevitably rest is founded on ideas that are central to our existence, to our freedom to lead meaningful lives, and to the rights to privacy, dignity, and autonomy.

Vaikom — two States, two leaders and a tale of reform

Manuraj Shunmugasundaram

an advocate practising before the Madras High Court and Spokesperson of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)

A little over a 100 years ago was a landmark socio-political moment like no other. The Vaikom Struggle, which culminated in the lifting of the barriers to the entry of backward caste Hindus to the local temple in the erstwhile Travancore princely state, would be the first of many mass movements that brought political attention to religious reform. Since then, the Dravidian Movement founded by Periyar E.V. Ramasamy and its self-respect principles have enabled wider reforms within the Hindu religion and paved the way for a more egalitarian society. What is less understood is that this was made possible only due to the insertion of a key clause in the Constitution by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Celebrating the centenary of Vaikom is not just a tribute to Periyar's persistence and B.R. Ambedkar's acumen but also a re-assertion of the strong reformist tendencies that continue to pervade through modern-day politik in South India.

The evolution of a mass movement

The Vaikom Struggle was fought against the prohibition of backward caste Hindus from walking on the streets adjacent to the Vaikom Mahadeva temple. When leaders of Kerala State Congress Committee and other social activist leaders began agitating against the injustice, they faced a clamp down by the administration. With the entry of Periyar in 1924, it slowly became a mass movement, bringing people from all classes within its fold. In November 1925, when the restrictions to walk on the streets finally lifted, the long arc of political movement began tilting towards social justice. In the decade that followed, movements erupted in other parts of the country, with B.R. Ambedkar leading protests to enter the Ambadevi Temple and Kalaram Mandir, where Dalits were denied entry.

However, the trajectory of reform in South India was progressing at a faster pace with the Legislative Assembly introducing a Bill to allow temple entry in 1932, followed by the Travancore Temple Entry Proclamation in 1936, the Malabar Temple Entry Bill 1938. There was also the entry of backward castes in the Madurai Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple and the Thanjavur Brihadeeswara Temple in 1939. The Madras Temple Entry Authorization Act 1947 enabled Hindus of all castes to enter and offer worship in all temples within the then Madras Presidency.

> The Vaikom Struggle was a landmark socio-political moment like no other

Though many of these reforms took place prior to the adoption of the Constitution of India, the Constituent Assembly took great care in delimiting the right to freedom of religion. During discussions on December 7, 1948, B.R. Ambedkar included the prefix 'subject to public order, morality and health' restricting the extent of the fundamental right and thereby enabling state intervention when necessary.

These seven words went on to form the legal and legitimate basis for reforms within the fold of religion, thereby enabling constitutional courts to intercede when there was a contestation of fundamental rights, namely between those of equality and religion.

State and the issue of regulation

The larger issue has always been whether temples, and religion at large, can be regulated by the state. If this is allowed, some argue, then the government will lose its secular character. There can be nothing further from the truth or logic. The intervention of the State to regulate temples, which are public spaces, is to ensure equality and access. A long history, beginning with the enactment of the Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Act 1927 to the present-day Tamil Nadu Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act 1959, would make it apparent the legislative intent to manage religious affairs in consonance with public order and morality. This position has been confirmed through various judgments beginning from *The Commissioner, Hindu Religious Endowments, Madras vs Sri Lakshmindra Thirtha Swamiar of Sri Shirur Mutt* 1954 (Shirur Mutt case), where the Supreme Court of India upheld the proposition that the state can manage the secular affairs of the temple and propounded the test of essential religious practice.

Since then, successive governments in Tamil Nadu, beginning in 1970, have enacted laws to enable backward caste Hindus to be appointed as *archakas* (priests), which some have regarded as a contentious act of interference in religious affairs. In such instances, the Court has upheld the right of the State to manage secular matters in temples while carving out a special category of 'Agamic temples'.

Change and resistance

Over the last few years, Governments of Kerala and Tamil Nadu have appointed hundreds of trained *archakas*, Odhuvaars and Bhattacharyas from non-Brahmin castes. These have been met with resistance within and outside the courts of law. These reforms challenge orthodox religious beliefs and entrenched social diktats. Nevertheless, the push for reforms is stronger than before. One hundred years after Vaikom and over 75 years since the Constituent Assembly debate on this issue, there is a compelling moral consensus that is emerging. While the Governments of Tamil Nadu and Kerala have collaborated to commemorate the centenary of the Vaikom Struggle on December 12, 2024, they are also celebrating a historic event that brought together two States. They are paying tribute to the start of a social reform trajectory that was made possible due to the coming together of two of the greatest leaders.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

INDIA bloc leadership

Solving the 'problems of the INDIA bloc' is not that simple as the main issue now seems to be about leadership. With some leaders in the bloc for a 'change of the captain', it cannot be passed off as worth ignoring. The Leader of the Opposition's advice to his party MPs 'not to react to remarks by allies' on the subject can only indicate his lack of wisdom or diplomacy.

The situation now is no surprise especially when parties that are ideologically different or with no ideologies make unions. Meanwhile, the proposal by several Congress leaders that the party fight elections on its own has its sides. The Congress has not completely lost its status as a Grand Old Party. Then again, the leadership comes into the picture. The truth is that it is only the Congress that has the background to be an effective Opposition in the country — which is the prime political necessity.

P.R.V. Raja,
Pandalam, Kerala

A weak and fragile Opposition is only helping the ruling party. Crucial decisions are being taken without 'quality questioning' and this does not augur well for the nation. The new Parliament building, built with a lot of fanfare, raised hopes of a positive environment. But, sadly, it is a case of non-functional business. As far as the Congress is concerned, it needs to share some of the blame as it seems clueless and directionless.

Balasubramaniam Pavani,
Secunderabad

S.M. Krishna

In the passing of S.M. Krishna, the nation has lost a stalwart politician who shaped and elevated the garden city to an international level with a well-established "Brand Bengaluru". His passing marks the end of an era in politics, leaving behind a legacy of public service and progressive governance.

R. Sivakumar,
Chennai

Indian territory and China

The External Affairs Minister, in his statement in Parliament on the border issue with China, said, "The House is cognizant of the fact that China is in Illegal occupation of 38,000 km² of Indian territory in Aksai Chin as a result of the 1962 conflicts and the event that preceded it. Furthermore, Pakistan illegally ceded 5,180 km² of Indian territory to China in 1963, which has been under its occupation since 1948." There needs to be more clarity on how India will prevent the loss of more territory.

Ved Shaha,
Kolhapur, Maharashtra

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Chief Justices need longer tenures

N.L. Rajah

Senior Advocate, Madras High Court

In September, Chief Justices were appointed to eight High Courts across India. While a good move, the fact that all of them, with the exception of one, will have very short tenures is unfortunate. This is a persistent problem that calls for urgent remedial action since it affects the institutional effectiveness of the judiciary.

Short tenures

In fact, one Chief Justice has already completed his tenure. Justice Rajiv Shakdher, who was Chief Justice of the Himachal Pradesh High Court, retired after just 24 days, on October 18. Just as he was settling into his role, he had to attend his farewell. Justice Manmohan, who had been serving as the Acting Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court, was sworn in as Chief Justice on September 29. On December 3, the Union government announced the appointment of Chief Justice Manmohan as a judge of the Supreme Court. Justice Tashi Rabstan will serve a tenure of about six months as Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. Justice Suresh Kumar Kait, who was appointed as the Chief Justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court, has a tenure of about eight months. Justice K.R. Shriram, appointed as Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, will serve a one-year tenure. Justice Indra Prasanna Mukerji, the Chief Justice of the Meghalaya High Court, will also be retiring around the same time as Justice Shriram. Justice Nitin Madhukar Jamdar, Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court, has a tenure of about 15 months. The only judge who is will serve a relatively long tenure of about four years is Justice M.S. Ramachandra Rao, who has been appointed as Chief Justice in Jharkhand.

The Chief Justice of a High Court plays a pivotal role in sustaining the all-round health of the institution. The Chief Justice administers the institution, tracks its financial health, plays an important role in recommending names for judgeship, constitutes various committees to administer the institution, attends to the welfare of the staff of the High Court, takes disciplinary action against erring trial court judges and staff when warranted, arranges for defence of such action before appropriate authorities when questioned, responds to innumerable mundane administrative requests, accepts invitations and participates in various symposia, seminars, and functions that are not necessarily restricted to law, participates in functions organised by the Bar Councils and various advocate associations across the State, and addresses problems related to legal education in the State apart from, of course, discharging the function as the top judicial authority of the State. Clearly, doing all of this in the time available is a daunting task.

High Courts are not compact institutions. Further, the tasks that need the attention of a Chief Justice in a High Court situated in one part of the country could be vastly different from what is required of a Chief Justice in a High Court in another part of the country. To understand each of these institutions in their entirety or even substantially takes time and effort. Most Chief Justices barely understand the requirements of the institution by the time their terms cease.

A lot has been said about the short tenure of Chief Justices. During his farewell speech in 2022, Supreme Court judge Justice L. Nageswara Rao said those elevated as judges to the top court must get a "minimum seven to eight years" in office "if not 10 years". He said, "It takes them (Chief Justices) 1.5 to two years to understand how the Court functions here because it is completely different from the High Courts." He added that by the time they settle down, "they are looking at their retirement". Several Chief Justices who have retired after brief tenures have voiced similar sentiments. This is a similar lament among Chief Justices of the High Courts too. Yet, little attention has been paid to the problem.

> By the time Chief Justices have understood the functioning of the Court, it is time for them to retire

A lesson from the British

It was not so during British rule. Back then, it was a norm for Chief Justices to have long tenures. The Madras High Court came into existence in 1862. When it completed 150 years in 2012, it had completed 85 years as a Court in British India and 65 years as a Court in independent India. The first Chief Justice was Sir Colley Harman Scotland. In 1947, when it had completed 85 years, the Madras High Court had had just 11 Chief Justices. Each of them had enjoyed an average tenure of a little less than eight years. During the Madras High Court's 150th year celebrations, Justice M.Y. Iqbal was the 35th Chief Justice. So, in 65 years, the Court had had 24 Chief Justices, which means the average tenure of those judges was hardly 2.75 years. The average term reduces further when we deduct the tenures of Chief Justice P.V. Rajamannar, who served a term of 13 years, and Chief Justice Veeraswami K., who had a tenure of about seven years. This means that there were 22 Chief Justices in 45 years, which brings down the average term of each to merely more than over two years.

While the tasks of Chief Justices are only increasing and becoming more complicated, the duration given to them to address these are becoming shorter and shorter. When the system provides such little time for the incumbents to even understand the system, what scope is there for innovation, reform, and improvement?

The attempt here is not to provide prescriptions to the malady. It is to emphasise that the problem needs to be addressed. It can only be resolved by a joint deliberation of stakeholders, including the Bar. It is important that they evolve a solution before the problem seriously affects the system.

The BRS: defeated but not destroyed

The party's aggressive narrative has put Congress on the back foot in Telangana

STATE OF PLAY

B. Chandrashekar
chandrashekar.bhalki@thehindu.co.in

The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), which faced an ignominious defeat in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections by failing to win a single seat despite putting up a decent show in the Assembly elections held earlier this year, has succeeded to a large extent in rebuilding its organisation. Stunned by its dismal performance but determined to fight back, the BRS has been watching the ruling Congress government closely and using every opportunity to attack it.

The BRS has been trying to reconnect with the people, understand its own mistakes, and slowly get back some of the support that it had lost, especially in the rural areas, by constantly highlighting the "failures" of the Congress government. It has been doing this without its founder, former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao, being in the public eye much.

The BRS has been highlighting the Congress's struggles in implementing the six guarantees and other promises made in the manifesto. This includes the delay in the disbursement of the balance instalment of the Rythu Bandhu/Bharosa for the 2023-24 Rabi season, the non-disbursement for the 2023-24 Kharif season, and the partial implementation of the ₹2 lakh crop loan waiver.

The BRS has also focused on the marking/demolition of settlements as part of the government's Musi Riverfront Development Project, the razing of structures of poor and middle class households near water bodies and 'nalas' (drains) by the Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency, and the slow pace of paddy procurement.

In late November, following protests, the State government withdrew the notification that it had issued for acquiring 1,358 acres of land from nearly 600 farmers in Dudyal mandal for setting up 'pharma villages'. However, the BRS has been keeping the land acquisition issue alive. It has led a group of tribal women from the village to approach the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and the National Human Rights Commission to highlight the alleged police atrocities against their families following the attack by some villagers against some of the authorities, including the District Collector. Leaders such as K.T. Rama Rao, T. Harish Rao, K.P. Vivekanand, Padi Kaushik Reddy, Manne Krishank, B. Vinod Kumar, and Dasoju Sravan, have been organising protests, press conferences, and posting on social media.

Despite its best efforts, the Congress has been forced to be on the defensive. Two weeks ago, Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy rejected the ₹100 crore donation from the Chairman of the Adani Group to the Young India Skills University in Telangana. He also announced that land would be acquired in Kodangal for an industrial corridor and not for the pharma cluster. These statements were made to avoid possible attacks from the Opposition.

In late November, at a meeting at Vemulawada, the Chief Minister also said that the Congress government has achieved in 10 months what the BRS government could not achieve in 10 years. However, given its long list of unkept promises and its failure to counter the strong narrative of the BRS, the Congress government has apparently conceded some ground to the Opposition. A senior leader of the BRS said, "Congress leaders, including the Chief Minister, are asking for Mr. Chandrasekhar Rao to be present on every forum but they seem to be unable to deal with the attacks by the second and third line of the BRS leadership. Mr. Rao will come into the picture at an appropriate time."

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) too has been raising its voice on various issues but its efforts appear to be lukewarm compared to the BRS. It expressed solidarity with the poor who live along the Musi river but has been inconsistent in its criticism. As a result, the enthusiasm among its ranks has waned.

While the Congress has its challenges, the BRS faces inquiries instituted by the State government into the previous government's irrigation and power deals. While the ruling party may be struggling to keep its promises given the constraints in funding, and the BJP, despite its good performance in the last Assembly and Lok Sabha elections, remains out of the battle ring, the BRS undoubtedly has an uphill task. Attacking the government is easy, but building the party, infusing energy in its ranks, and rebuilding its image is a more challenging task.

'Excessive heat' among most searched terms in 2024 in India

The top searches were otherwise dominated, as usual, by sporting events and elections

DATA POINT

The Hindu Data Team

In 2024, cricket and elections dominated Google searches in India. The Indian Premier League was the most searched term, followed by the T20 World Cup, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and election results 2024. The Olympics 2024 was the fifth most searched keyword. Excessive heat ranked as the sixth most searched term, highlighting concerns about extreme weather events. Industrialist Ratan Tata, who passed away in October, was the seventh most searched keyword. The Congress secured the eighth spot, while the Pro Kabaddi League and the Indian Super League secured the ninth and tenth spot.

Chart 1 shows the most searched terms in 2024 in India and the week these terms trended. The darkest shade points to the week when interest peaked in a particular news term, while the lighter shades point to the other weeks when the term was searched but there was relatively less interest in it.

Wrestler Vinesh Phogat was the most searched personality this year. *Heeramandi*, *Mirzapur*, and *The Last of Us* were the most searched shows. *Stree 2*, *Kalki 2898 AD*, and *12th Fail* were the most searched movies. The terms 'All eyes on Rafah', 'Aakay', and 'cervical cancer' were the most searched for their meanings by Indians. Aakay is the name of Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma's son.

'AQI near me' was searched the most in the 'near me' category, followed by 'Onam Sadhya near me', and 'Ram Mandir near me'.

Chart 2 shows the same information for searches across the world. Copa America and the UEFA European Championship were the top two searches. Singer Liam Payne, U.S. President-elect Donald Trump, and Princess of Wales Kate Middleton were among the top 10.

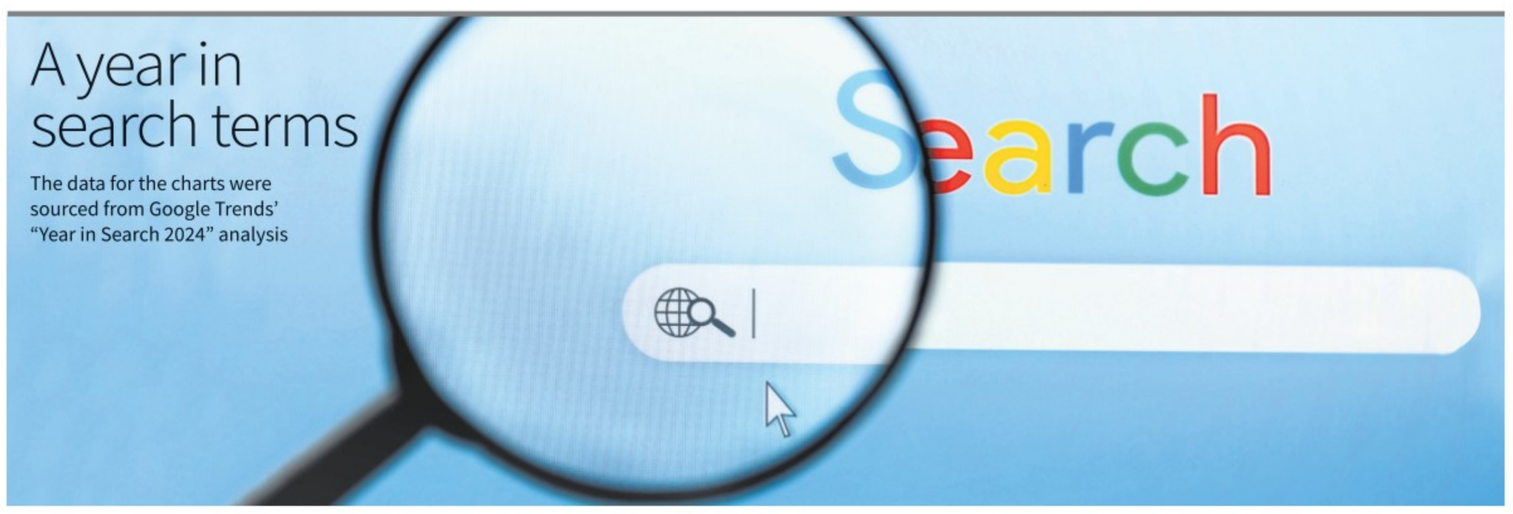


Chart 1 The chart shows the most searched terms in India in 2024 and the week these search terms trended. The darkest shade points to the week when interest peaked in a particular news term. The lighter shades point to interest on other weeks

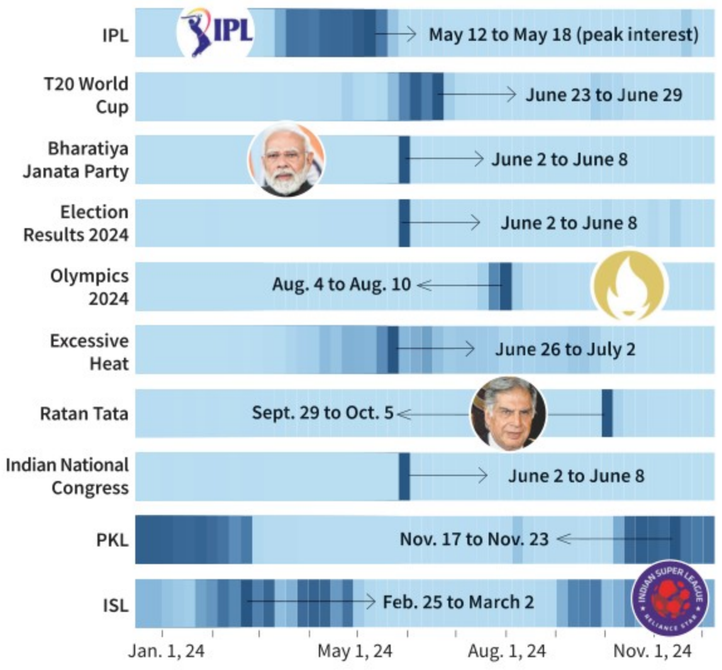


Chart 2 The chart shows the most searched terms globally in 2024 and the week these search terms trended. The darkest shade points to the week when interest peaked in a particular news term. The lighter shades point to interest on other weeks

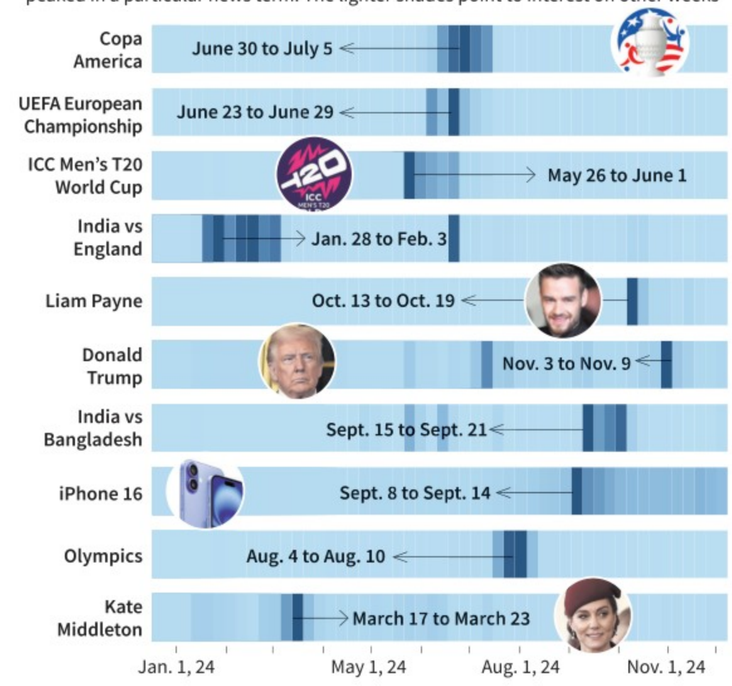


Table 3 The top 10 most searched phrases in India across various categories throughout 2024

MOVIES:	SHOWS:	HUM TO SEARCH: TOP SONGS	PEOPLE:	MEANING:	NEAR ME:
1. Stree 2 | 2. Kalki 2898 AD | 3. 12th Fail	1. Heeramandi	1. Naadaniyan	1. Vinesh Phogat | 2. Nitish Kumar	1. All Eyes on Rafah	1. AQI
4. Laapataa Ladies	2. Mirzapur | 3. The Last of Us | 4. Big Boss 17	2. Husn | 3. Illuminati	3. Chirag Paswan	2. Aakay	2. Onam Sadhya
5. Hanu-Man	5. Panchayat	4. Katchi Sera | 5. Ye Tune Kya Kiya | 6. Aaj Ki Raat	4. Hardik Pandya	3. Cervical Cancer	3. Ram Mandir
6. Maharaja	6. Queen of Tears	7. Jo Tum Mere Ho	5. Pawan Kalyan	4. Tawaif | 5. Demure	4. Sports Bars
7. Manjummel Boys	7. Marry My Husband	8. Yeh Raatein Yeh Mausam - Lofi | 9. Aasa Kooda	6. Shashank Singh	6. Pookie	5. Best Bakery
8. The Greatest of All Time | 9. Salaar	8. Kota Factory	10. MASHA ULTRAFUNK	7. Poonam Pandey	7. Stampede	6. Trendy Cafes
10. Aavesham	9. Big Boss 18		8. Radhika Merchant	8. Moye Moye	7. Polio Drops
	10. 3 Body Problem		9. Abhishek Sharma	9. Consecration	8. Shiva Temple
			10. Lakshya Sen	10. Good Friday	9. Best Coffee
					10. Hanuman movie

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 12, 1974

Cease-fire in Rhodesia's guerilla war: detainees to be freed

Salisbury, Dec. 11: Prime Minister, Ian Smith, to-night announced a ceasefire in Rhodesia's guerilla war and the release of African political detainees as a prelude to a constitutional conference.

Mr. Smith made the announcement in a radio broadcast to the nation which marked the most important development for years in attempts to solve the deadlocked Rhodesian constitutional question.

Mr. Smith said terrorism would cease immediately but warned people in affected areas to continue their vigilance until the ceasefire became fully effective.

Mr. Smith disclosed that talks on the Rhodesian problem between the Government and African nationalists had continued after last week's abortive discussions in the Zambian capital, Lusaka, and the differences that separated them had "now been resolved."

Among those to be released would be the leaders of two previously banned national organisations – Mr. Joshua Nkomo, President of the Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), African People's Union (ZAPU), and the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, President of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU).

They have been to Lusaka this week for talks with Rhodesia's neighbours, Zambia, Tanzania, and Botswana. They were temporarily freed from detention in Rhodesia to attend the talks.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO DECEMBER 12, 1924

Dense fog in London

Leafield (Oxford), midnight, Dec. 11: London and practically all parts of the British Isles are enveloped in exceptionally dense fog. The cancellation of all cross channel air services, the abandonment of racing, the postponement of the Oxford and Cambridge Association Football Match and the collision of two London buses causing injury to 10 passengers are among the results. In London, where the fog seems to be most intense, it was as dark as midnight at midday. Street lamps are supplemented by flares. Train and motor traffic is also considerably retarded.

From Page One

Parliament sees chaos amid BJP-Cong. tussle

Addressing an INDIA bloc press conference, Congress president and Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge alleged that Mr. Dhankhar was working as a "government spokesperson" and acting like a "school headmaster".

"We have no hesitation in saying that the biggest disrupter in the Rajya Sabha is the chairman himself," Mr. Kharge said, adding, "His loyalty is towards the ruling party, instead of the Constitution and constitutional traditions. We can see that he is acting as a government spokesperson for the sake of his next promotion." Setting the tone for the day, Mr. Rijiju attacked the Opposition for the no-confidence notice moved against Mr. Dhankhar. "You have no right to be members if you can't respect the Chair. We have taken an oath to protect the sovereignty of the country," he told the Opposition before raising the issue of alleged links between Mr. Soros and the Congress.

'Won't allow the drama'

"We will not allow the drama of notice [against Mr. Dhankhar] to succeed. What is the relationship between Soros and Congress? This should be revealed...Congress should apologise to the nation," the Parliamentary Affairs Minister added.

The Rajya Sabha was adjourned till noon amid protests from Congress-led Opposition members. When it reassembled, Leader of the House Mr. Nadda alleged the Opposition's no-confidence notice against Mr. Dhankhar was a diversionary tactic after "ties between the top Congress leadership and Soros" emerged.

"This is a design to deviate the attention of the nation from the issue of the sovereignty of the country and the threat to internal and external security and the Congress has contributed to it. They are becoming a tool in their (foreign forces') hands in supporting them and there should be a discussion on this," Mr. Nadda alleged.

As a war of words broke out between the Opposition and Treasury benches, the House was adjourned for the day.

'Fed up with his behaviour'

The INDIA bloc held a press conference to explain why they were "forced" to bring the motion against the Rajya Sabha Chairman. Mr. Kharge said the Chairman's conduct had been contrary to the dignity of the post he held; he targeted Opposition leaders and often praised the government. The Congress president, however, clarified that the notice against Mr. Dhankhar was not about "personal grievances" or "political battles". "We are fed up with his behaviour and partiality. That is why we have given the notice for his removal," he said.

After days of interruptions, the Lok Sabha functioned normally during the Question Hour. Trouble began when Congress member Mr. Gogoi raised the issue of Manipur violence and accused the BJP of raising the Soros issue to hide their failures in the northeastern State.

Responding to him, the Commerce Minister questioned the Congress leadership's alleged links with Soros-backed outfits that were allegedly working against the country. Amid allegations, the House adjourned till 2 p.m. When the House reassembled, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw replied to an earlier debate on the Railway Amendment Bill, 2024, which was passed. Soon after, Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai moved a Bill to amend the Disaster Management Act.

While Congress' Shashi Tharoor was the first speaker from the Opposition benches, trouble started when Mr. Banerjee spoke on the Bill.

The Trinamool member alleged non-cooperation by the Central government during the COVID-19 pandemic but Mr. Rai countered it, saying it was Prime Minister Narendra Modi who helped all the States and successfully handled the crisis by taking everyone along.

Mr. Rai also alleged that the West Bengal government tried to put hurdles in the transportation of COVID vaccines through its territory.

India does not endorse Hasina's statements: Misri

Former Bangladesh PM's criticism of interim govt. a pinprick in bilateral ties, Foreign Secretary tells House panel; New Delhi's ties with Dhaka are not based on a 'single political party', he says

Suhasini Haidar
Sobhana K. Nair
Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri met his Bangladesh counterpart, Mohammad Jashim Uddin, in Dhaka on Monday. AFP

Briefing the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs, headed by Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on Wednesday said India does not endorse deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's criticism of the interim government in Bangladesh and it remains a pinprick in India-Bangladesh relationship.

He said India's relation with Bangladesh was not limited to a "single political party" or a government and that India was focused on the "people of Bangladesh".

Mr. Misri said Ms. Hasina was using "private communication devices" to make her comments and that the Government of India was not involved in providing her with any platform or facility that enables her to carry out her political activity from Indian soil. This, he said, was part of India's traditional practice of avoiding interference in third countries.

Mr. Misri's remarks acquire significance as Ms. Hasina has been making video messages criticising the interim government in Bangladesh led by Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus.

Mr. Misri informed the committee that during his visit to Dhaka on Monday, he informed the interim government that India's relation with Bangladesh went beyond "a particular political party" or a particular government and that India prioritised relation with the people of Bangladesh and would engage with the government of the day.

Mr. Misri briefed the committee a day after returning from Dhaka, where he conveyed India's "concerns" about the "regrettable incidents" in Bangladesh.

He said India was concerned about the lack of acknowledgment of the alleged incidents of violence against minority communities but welcomed the latest report that authorities in Bangladesh had arrested 88 persons related to the violence against minority communities after the fall of the Hasina government. Mr. Misri, according to sources, also said that there had been tangible improvement in the relationship after his visit.

Both sides, Mr. Misri said, explained their concerns. For India, he said, the Bangladesh authorities' decision to release many of the convicted "terrorists" who are indulging in anti-India rhetoric, remained an issue of deep concern. The Bangladesh authorities, meanwhile, flagged the "disinformation" campaign in the Indian press about the events unfolding in that country.

Many committee members raised the arrest of ISKCON monks in Bangladesh, but no reply, as per the sources, was forthcoming from Mr. Misri on the issue.

He, however, told the members that during his visit to Dhaka, he informed the authorities there that there had to be an "acknowledgment" of the incidents that involved attacks on temples and the Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre.

Only light-touch regulation will help innovation: official

It will lead to deeper listener engagement, empowering India's creators, says I&B Secretary

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Information and Broadcasting Secretary Sanjay Jaju on Wednesday said that light-touch regulations would enable innovative content creation and deeper listener engagement by empowering India's creators.

Speaking at a conference organised by the India Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA) in collaboration with the Association of Radio Operators for India (AROI) on "Future of digital radio broadcasting in India", Mr. Jaju said: "We stand at the threshold of a new era brimming with possibilities and opportunities in broadcasting. Light-touch regulations will enable innovative content creation and deeper listener engagement, empowering India's creators. Radio derives its strength from localised content choice embracing diverse community interests and cultural preferences."

"Technology adoption, even in far-flung areas, must happen while developing an ecosystem to facilitate deployment of digital radio broadcasting in India. As part of our efforts, we are set to roll out digital FM radio broadcasting in 13 metros and major cities in the coming months, marking a significant step forward," he said.

"This initiative arrives at a crucial juncture as the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India engage in public consultations for a Digital Radio Broadcast Policy for private broadcasters," read a release issued by the organisers.

ICEA chairman Pankaj Mohindroo said: "The transition to digital radio is not just essential – it is overdue. With India's rich cultural landscape, digital radio technology offers unparalleled opportunities for innovation, multilingual content, and varied genres tailored to India's diverse demography."

Protest turns violent in Parbhani district

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The bandh called in protest against the vandalism of a Constitution replica turned violent on Wednesday in Maharashtra's Parbhani district and the police imposed prohibitory orders in the area. The protesters demanded quick action and a probe against the "mastermind behind the incident".

In the beginning, the bandh remained peaceful, but later on, violence broke out. The police imposed the ban orders in Parbhani district, suspended Internet in Parbhani city, and appealed to the people to maintain law and order. Additional forces were deployed. "The situation is under control now; we arrested the accused and soon the FIR will be filed. The accused had been suffering from mental health ailments," District Magistrate Raghunath Gawade told *The Hindu*.

Will go to 'any extent possible' to eradicate manual scavenging: SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday vowed to go to "any extent possible" to ensure that manual scavenging and hazardous manual cleaning of sewers and septic tanks are wiped out, saying the issue dealt with the question of human dignity.

"This is something very close to our hearts and minds. We will not leave it. We tell you, we will go to any extent to get our judgment of October 2023 complied with, come what may," a Special Bench of Justices Sudanshu Dhulia and Aravind Kumar addressed the Central government, represented by Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati.

The Supreme Court was referring to its October 20, 2023 judgment in which it had issued directions to the Union and State governments to take measures to eradicate manual scavenging and hazardous cleaning across the country.

Question of dignity: The court had noted that these "inhuman" occupation continued despite its 2023 order. FILE PHOTO

The court had noted that these "inhuman" occupations continue, often with fatal results when workers die of asphyxia.

The court had observed that claims of fraternity, equality and dignity among citizens remain a mere illusion if a sizeable section of society was forced to enter sewers for a living and die trapped in them even a decade after the introduction of the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013.

"Each of us owe to this large segment of the population, who have remained unseen, unheard and muted, in bondage systematically trapped in inhuman conditions," the court had noted while enhancing the compensation payable for sewer deaths to ₹30 lakh from the earlier ₹10 lakh.

Over a year later, on Wednesday, the Special Bench noted that States have hardly budged to implement the directions in the judgment.

"As regards total eradication, it has not happened anywhere, not even in one municipality... Show us one model municipality where there is no hazardous cleaning," Justice Dhulia said.

The *amicus curiae*, senior advocate K. Parameshwar, said the proof that sewer deaths remain unabated is found in three recent judgments of the Delhi High Court, which had ordered the payment of enhanced compensation to the victims' families. The court asked how these practices tend to continue despite the government's National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem or the NAMASTE scheme.

The court directed the Social Justice Ministry to meet with the States in the next two weeks and iron out an action plan for implementation of the October 2023 judgment. The court afforded the government the opportunity to iron out the creases in the implementation or face contempt action.

Liquor policy case: SC eases Sisodia's bail condition

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court relaxed a bail condition imposed on Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Manish Sisodia to be present before the investigating officer on Mondays and Thursdays at 10 a.m.

The top court had granted him bail in both the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe connected to the Delhi liquor policy case, and the Enforcement Directorate's (ED) money laundering charges linked to the case.

He resigned from the Delhi Cabinet on February 28, 2023.

A Bench of Justices B.R. Gavai and K.V. Viswanathan eased the conditions, calling them unnecessary.

However, the court directed Mr. Sisodia to regularly attend the trial.

The relaxation of the bail condition is common to both the CBI and the ED cases.

EU envoy meets Rahul; bilateral ties discussed

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Ambassador of the European Union to India, Hervé Delphin, and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, on Wednesday, discussed topics relevant to the relations and future of democracies in a world marked by challenges, geopolitical tensions, and crises.

The Congress posted pictures of Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Delphin from the meeting on X and, said, "They had a lively and detailed discussion covering a broad range of topics relevant to the relations and future of our democracies in a world marked by challenges, geopolitical tensions and crises."

Amid crackdown by police, UN team visits Jammu slum housing Rohingya

The Hindu Bureau
JAMMU

Amid the renewed crackdown on Rohingya and Bangladeshi nationals by the police in Jammu and Kashmir, a two-member team of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) took stock of the situation in Jammu on Wednesday.

The UN team, comprising Senior Protection Officer Tomoko Fukumura and Protection Associate Ragini Trakroo Zutushi, visited the Rohingya Muslim community in the Kiryani Talab area of Narwal, a slum housing shanties of the community. According to the Rohingya people living illegally in Jammu, several members of the community were rounded up by the police in the past month.

The government has already passed directions against snapping power and electricity supply to these families in Jammu. PTI

The visit assumes significance as it came in the wake of a fresh crackdown on "illegal" immigrants in Jammu since November. The drive also attracted spotlight after the authorities started cutting off water and electricity supplies to Rohingya and Bangladeshi settlers following an order passed by a magistrate on a petition by the police.

However, J&K's ruling party National Conference, including Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and party president Farooq Abdullah, have opposed any move to cut off essential supplies to these families. Both leaders have pitched for a humanitarian approach towards the community "till the Centre finalises a policy on how to deal with the community".

No ill-treatment

The government has already passed directions against snapping power and electricity supply to these families in Jammu. "They (Rohingya) cannot be treated like animals and left to die in the winters," Mr. Omar said.

Eighteen first information reports have been registered against landlords sheltering them in Jammu and over 400 Rohingya people were identified living in Jammu. Several have been detained, officials said.

Opposition plans motion to impeach Uttar Pradesh judge

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Opposition has started efforts to move an impeachment motion against Allahabad High Court judge Shekhar Kumar Yadav for his controversial statements at a recent Vishwa Hindu Parishad event.

Independent MP and senior lawyer Kapil Sibal has initiated the work to submit separate notices to both Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to impeach Justice Yadav. The notice needs the endorsement of 50 MPs in the Rajya Sabha to be considered by the Chairman or 100 MPs in the Lok Sabha to be taken up as an impeachment motion in the Lok Sabha.

An Opposition MP told *The Hindu* that the notices would be moved in a day or two.

Shekhar Kumar Yadav

"We are preparing the notices for both the Houses. So far, we have received about 40 signatures from the Rajya Sabha. More than 100 MPs from the Lok Sabha are also willing to sign the notice. Mr. Sibal is in touch with MPs across political parties," he said.

Parliament has considered five impeachment notices in the past, including against Justice Soumitra Sen. If the notices are accepted either by the Chairman or by the Speaker, an investigation committee is formed with three members – the Chief Justice or other judges of the Supreme Court, the Chief Justice of a High Court, and a distinguished jurist. The next step will be based on this report by the expert panel.

"In case the notices of motion are given on the same day in both the Houses, the committee will be constituted only if the motion has been admitted in both the Houses and thereupon jointly by the Speaker and the Chairman. In case notices of motion are given in both the Houses on different dates, the notice that is given later shall stand rejected," says a note prepared by the Lok Sabha.

A view of the Lit for Life festival, 2024, at the Sir Mutha Concert Hall in Chennai. B. VELANKANNI RAJ

Literature fests celebrate books, writing, and ideas behind words

Nirmala Lakshman

Chairperson, The Hindu Group, and Founder and Chair, The Hindu Lit for Life

Literature festivals celebrate books and writing and in essence the ideas behind written and spoken words. They are spaces for the communion of ideas that emerge from books, spaces where vibrant interactions between readers and writers can happen, spaces where enriching discussions and dialogue can promote better understanding between a diverse group of people with varied points of view. *The Hindu*'s Lit for Life is a festival that while promoting a love for literature can also light up one's life by the ideas that one encounters, provoking new pathways of thought and by paving a way for greater clarity when dealing with the complex world around us. So, it is literature for life as well as being lit up for life.

THE HINDU LIT FOR LIFE 2025
THE SHARPEST LITERATURE FESTIVAL IN INDIA
In association with
CHRIST (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY) BANGALORE · INDIA

For the last 13 years, we have consciously created a platform that is inclusive in nature and showcases a variety of expression in the arts, in literature and in culture. Diversity and the free expression of it is at the core of a democratic society and what better way can there be of celebrating this than by facilitating and providing a forum that fosters this. In this endeavour we have been greatly supported by the input and presence of wonderful writers, speakers, artists and public intellectuals. We are privileged to continue year upon year and put together a festival that will always shine a light.

The Hindu Lit for Life: the literary movement now expands to three cities

Dialogues will be held in Bengaluru and Hyderabad in December, followed by the main event in Chennai in January 2025 featuring star-studded sessions, an exhibition on paper, film screenings

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Bengaluru and Hyderabad will get a sneak peek at *The Hindu* Lit for Life in December before the main festival kicks off in Chennai on January 18 and 19.

Together, the events in the three cities reaffirm the promise of championing free speech, democracy, and a plurality of voices. For over a decade, Lit for Life has been a platform that celebrates literature, ideas, and cultural dialogue, growing from a literary gathering into a movement that bridges cultures, genres, and audiences.

On December 13, in Hyderabad, veteran journalists Rajdeep Sardesai and Neerja Chowdhury will join B. Mahesh Kumar Goud, a member of the Telangana Legislative Council and president of the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee, for a discussion on "A political circus", moderated by Swathi Vadlamudi, Senior Assistant Editor, *The Hindu*.

Another session on "The joy of food" will feature food writers Gauri Devidayal and Ruth Dsouza Prabhu in conversation with Prabalika Borah, Senior Assistant Editor, *The Hindu*.

On December 20, Bengaluru will host three discussions. "Murder, she wrote" brings together acclaimed authors Anita Nair and Harini Nagendra and literary agent Jayapriya Vasudevan to offer a peek behind the curtain of crime storytelling.

"Sculpting song into clay" features ceramic sculptor G. Reghu in conversation with writer, art curator, and biographer Ina Puri. Cinema will take centre stage in "Viewfinder: a life in cinema", with actor, director and producer Amol Palekar in conversation with film historian and author Balaji Vittal.

Festival of ideas: The crowd at *The Hindu* Lit for Life in Chennai in January 2024. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Guest list

In January, the grand festival in Chennai at the Sir Mutha Concert Hall and *The Hindu* Pavilion in the Lady Andal School will have a smorgasbord of over 40 sessions featuring award-winning authors, emerging voices, global perspectives, distinctly local stories, and more.

The star-studded list includes Francesc Miralles, Hussain Zaidi, Leander Paes, Anirudh Kanisetti, Prajakta Koli, Aruna Roy, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam. Tamil literature is represented by writer Vennila A., author and documentary filmmaker Vasuki Bhaskar, and poets Perundevi and Bogan Shankar.

A special feature at the festival grounds will be

It's a celebration of ideas that offers a moment to pause, reflect, and engage with diverse voices

"Imprint: the paper and book project", exploring the materiality of art. Divided into two sections – The Paper Project, curated by Sharan Apparao, and the Book Project, curated by Shijo Jacob – this exhibition will showcase artworks on paper by contemporary artists from across India.

Something for everyone

As always, these are only part of the experience. Activities during the run-up to the event include the Mobile Library on Wheels that stops in underserved areas of Chennai in an effort to make books accessible to all, literary walks taking participants through the city's rich literary history, and open-air Moonlight Cinema screenings of film adaptations of classic novels.

With all this and more on offer, *The Hindu* Lit for Life, 2025, is more than just a gathering of writers, thinkers, and creators. It is a celebration of ideas that offers a moment to pause, reflect, and engage with voices both familiar and fresh. Whether you are a lifelong reader, a budding writer, or simply a seeker of stories, there is something for you at *The Hindu* Lit For Life in January 2025.

To register for *The Hindu* Lit For Life Dialogue, visit https://bit.ly/LFLD25

To register for *The Hindu* Lit For Life in January 2025, visit https://www.thehindu.com/lit-for-life/ or scan the QR code

The Hindu Lit For Life is organised in association with Christ University, Bengaluru. Bookstore partner: Crossword

When readers and writers come together

Rachna Singh Davidar
Festival director

When you read or write, you do so alone. However, when readers and writers come together at literature festivals, they kindle an immense energy that transports everyone concerned to a different plane altogether. The magic of books and ideas being communicated to writers and readers in new and surprising ways and the crackling electricity that speakers and audiences generate at successful sessions – that's what I look forward to at every edition of *The Hindu*'s Lit for Life.

This month, I am thrilled that we are expanding to two new cities – Hyderabad and Bengaluru – with Lit For Life Dialogues. And, in 2025, the mother festival in Chennai will be truly electrifying. Attendees will get to listen to Nobel Prize winners like Venki Ramakrishnan, wordsmiths like Shashi Tharoor, thespians like Kamal Hassan, music maestros like L. Subramaniam, novelists like Abraham Verghese and Jenny Erpenbeck (the International Booker winner), and historians like Peter Frankopan and Manu Pillai. A highlight will be the launching of *The Tamils*, a magisterial book about the community by Nirmala Lakshman, chairperson of The Hindu Group and Founder and Chair of Lit For Life.

So, come and experience our festival, we guarantee that it will not only stimulate how you think about important issues, but will keep you gloriously entertained.

Keeping a sharp eye on the current pulse

Prasanna Ramaswamy
Programme curator

As someone who is as much a partaker as one of the curators, I find the festival vibrant and engaging, with its vast and dense sweep of titles and speakers. I come across excited exchanges about the sessions in the lounges, food stalls and in the cues, which in turn energise us to work with more imagination. While we keep the list of all-time greats in writers, artists, and speakers growing, we also keep a sharp eye on the current pulse so as to not miss out on a Kanhaiya Lal or Jignesh Mewani. To mention just a few names from the arts and culture world, this year we will feature Nalini Malani, a multimedia visual artist known across the world for her imaginative interpretations of literature and history; theatre director Amal Allana speaking about Ebrahim Alkazi's work that ushered in the modern theatre movement in India; a talk on the cultural movement Neelam; filmmaker Rajiv Menon sharing his memories on collaboration with Tamil author Sujatha; director K. Hariharan discussing his book on Kamal Haasan or maybe with him, V. Sriram with his inimitable wit on how composers called the God names – and much more.

No-confidence motion on V-P a bid to 'insult' Jats, says BJP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Wednesday accused the Congress of attempting to "not just defame" Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankar but also "insult" the Jat community after the Opposition initiated a motion of no-confidence against him.

The move, the BJP said, was aimed at deflecting attention from the Gandhi family's alleged links with businessman George Soros.

Addressing a press conference at the BJP's national headquarters in New Delhi, BJP MP and spokesperson Sambit Patra termed the Opposition parties' notice for a "no-confidence motion" against Mr. Dhankar and the INDIA bloc's decision to move the Supreme Court on the EVM issue as "painful and disturbing".

"The Congress takes the issue of EVM to the Supreme Court again and again and returns defeated. Every time it tried to curse and drag the Election Commission, it faced embarrassment... Yet, the Congress is going to move the Supreme Court on the issue," Mr. Patra said.

This shows that the Congress does not have "any respect" for the Constitution of India, he said.

Amid din, Lok Sabha clears Railways Bill to enhance independence of Board

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Railways (Amendment) Bill, 2024, was passed in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday, despite disruptions to parliamentary proceedings. The Bill was passed five months after it was introduced on the floor of the House.

All the provisions in the erstwhile colonial-era Indian Railway Board Act, 1905, are proposed to be incorporated in the Railways Act, 1989, through this Bill. It is intended to simplify the legal framework and reduce the need to refer to two laws.

The Bill also proposes to amend the Railways Act, 1989, to provide statutory backing to the Railway Board, which has functioned without such a sanction since it began functioning.

The statutory powers seek to enhance the functioning and independence of the Railway Board. The provisions added to the amended Bill authorise the Union government to decide the composition of the Railway Board. This includes the number of members, their terms of service, and their qualifications and experience.

The Bill also proposes to improve operational efficiencies and decentralise powers, granting greater autonomy to railway zones. Increasing autonomy has been a long-standing demand, supported by various committees, including the 2014 Sreedharan Committee.

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw speaks in the Lok Sabha during the Winter Session of Parliament in New Delhi on Wednesday. ANI

Independent regulator

The Bill proposes to establish an independent regulator to oversee tariffs, safety, and the participation of the private sector in the Railways. Recommendations to have an independent regulator were earlier made in 2015 by the Committee on Restructuring Railways.

The amendment is expected to speed up the approval process for train services that will help meet pending demands from various regions.

The Bill will allow the government to fast-track infrastructure and superfast train operations: for instance, extending the Arunachal Express via the Siwan, Thawe, Kaptanganj, and Gorakhpur route, which will benefit regions such as Bihar.

The railway network was established as a branch of the Public Works Department before Independence. "When the network expanded, Indian Railways Act, 1890, was enacted to enable proper functioning of different railway entities," Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw stated in the amendment.

Mr. Vaishnaw further said the railway organisation was separated from the Public Works Department and the Railway Board Act was enacted in 1905.

Shinde seeks Revenue dept.; Fadnavis and Ajit in Delhi

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar reached New Delhi on Wednesday amid discussions regarding Cabinet expansion. Mr. Pawar held a meeting with fellow Nationalist Congress Party leaders Sunil Tatkare and Praful Patel in the national capital.

Though there was no official word about the reason behind his visit, sources in his party said he was likely to meet top BJP leader and Union Minister Amit Shah. "Nothing has been decided yet," Mr. Tatkare told *The Hindu*.

"It is a courtesy visit where Devendra Fadnavis met Rajnath Singh, Nitin Gadkari, J.P. Nadda, President Droupadi Murmu, Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar. He will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah," an official source told *The Hindu*.

The two leaders are likely to stay in New Delhi on Thursday if the meeting is not held late on Wednesday night, the sources said.

Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde is learnt to be insistent on Revenue portfolio, apart from the key Urban Development department, sources said.

'MVA legislators in touch with BJP'

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Maharashtra BJP president Chandrashekhar Bawankule on Wednesday said that several MPs and MLAs from the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) were dissatisfied with their alliance and had been reaching out to the BJP. "These leaders feel neglected by their respective parties, citing lack of support and attention to constituency issues. They have expressed their concerns about the absence of constructive meetings to address local matters," Mr. Bawankule said.

Responding to allegations of 'Operation Lotus' [alleged BJP bid to engineer defection], Mr. Bawankule said, "Investigative agencies are performing their duties independently. The claims of misuse of the ED and the CBI are the usual complaints raised by MVA leaders."

'Take action against Kalyan'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A group of women BJP MPs on Wednesday met Speaker Om Birla and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju and sought "harsh" action against Trinamool Congress MP Kalyan Banerjee for his remarks.

MSME TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE
An Autonomous body under Ministry of MSME, Govt of India
Foundry Nagar, Agra - 282006 (U.P.)
Extension Centre - Coimbatore Organizes
Machine Learning Using Python
Online Training
Fee: 3540/-
COURSE CONTENT: Mean Median Mode, Standard Deviation, Percentile, Data Distribution, Scatter Plot, Linear Regression, Polynomial Regression, Multiple Regression, Decision Tree, Confusion Matrix, Hierarchical Clustering, Logistic Regression, Grid Search, Categorical Data, Bootstrap Aggregation, Cross Validation, AUC - ROC Curve.
For Registration
E-Certificate will be Awarded
Date & Time: 14, 15, 21, 22, 28th Dec 2024 | 9.30 A.M - 01.30 P.M
For more Details: 9600776611, 8667359360,7358887633
5 Days | Visit us at:www.ppdcagra.dcmsme.gov.in | Week-ends
Disclaimer: Be aware of fraudulent activities. We never ask to make payment on any personal account.

MAHATRANSCO
Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Co. Ltd.

SRM E-Tender Notice

Digitally signed online bids are invited through SRM E-tender process of MSETCL in two bid system from bidders who are registered Electrical Vendors/Contractors of MSETCL for following SRM E-tender;

RFx No.	E-Tender No.	Particulars	Estimated Cost	EMD	Tender Fees
7000033739	T- 33 / 2024-25 (4th call)	Work of replacement of existing 0.2 ACSR Panther conductor by equivalent CCC type HTLS conductor along with suitable hardware, accessories and porcelain long rod insulators for 132kV Kekatnimbhora - Pahur DCDC Line (Length= 18+18= 36ckm) for RE power evacuation under Green Energy Corridor (GEC) under Nashik Zone	Rs. 1907.11 Lakhs (Including GST)	Rs. 19,07,109.87/-	Rs. 25,000/- + GST

Sale period: 10.12.2024 to 24.12.2024, **Last Date of Submission:** 24.12.2024 up to 14:00 Hrs, **Date of opening (Tech. bid):** 24.12.2024 at 14:30Hrs (if possible). **Contact person:** Executive Engineer, EHV PC O&M Zone, Nashik. Phone No. 0253-2403010/02/07 Fax No. 0253-2403000. For further details please visit to **https://srmetender.mahatransco.in**

Chief Engineer, EHV PC (O&M), Zone, MSETCL, Nashik

INBRIEF

'Govt. must ensure protection of minorities in Bangladesh'

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday said the Centre must ensure protection of minorities in violence-hit Bangladesh. This comes even as multiple religious outfits across West Bengal and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) are holding rallies across the State to protest against the attack on minorities in the neighbouring country. In a public address, Ms. Banerjee said that protecting minorities wass the Union government's responsibility. Yet, she said, "As part of the Opposition, we are showing more responsibility. The task that should be done by the Prime Minister is being done by the Opposition."

Lawyer Vrinda Grover not to represent R.G. Kar victim's kin

Supreme Court advocate Vrinda Grover on Wednesday announced that she will no longer represent the family of the doctor who was raped and murdered at Kolkata's R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital on August 9. Ms. Grover and her chamber had been providing legal assistance to the victim's family not only at the Supreme Court but also at the Calcutta High Court and Sealdah court where the trial in the case has commenced. "At this stage, on account of certain intervening factors and circumstances, the chamber of Advocate Vrinda Grover is constrained to withdraw from the case proceedings in this matter and will no longer be representing the victim family," a statement said.

Three from Bangladesh get five years' imprisonment

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Special Court, Mumbai, has sentenced three Bangladeshi nationals to five years of imprisonment for illegal infiltration into India and possession of fake documents, the NIA said in a press statement on Wednesday.

The three accused persons were convicted and sentenced to five years in jail, along with ₹2,000 each as fine.

The case had originated from an FIR registered in March 2018 based on inputs received regarding several Bangladeshi nationals staying in Pune without valid documents, and abetting and aiding members of the ABT, a front organisation of the proscribed terror organisation, the al-Qaeda.

Based on its investigations, the NIA filed a chargesheet on September 7, 2018, against the accused under Section 120B of the IPC of criminal conspiracy, Section 471 for using forged documents, Sections 17, 19 and 20 of the Unlawful Activities [Prevention] Act, 1967 for unlawful activities and terrorism, and Section 14 of the Foreigners Act, 1946.

Recent killings in Bastar raise concern amid security gains

The latest to be killed is a BJP worker in Bijapur; in almost all the cases, it was alleged that the victim was a police informer, according to police

Shubhomoy Sikdar
RAIPUR

The killings of five people allegedly by Maoists in the past seven days in Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh has flagged some emerging vulnerabilities for the residents of the interior regions of conflict-hit Bastar.

The latest to be killed is the BJP worker Kudiam Mado, 35, in Bijapur district, on Tuesday. Mado was dragged from his home at Somanpalli village and strangled to death. A pamphlet found at the scene said the Maoists took responsibility for the murder while claiming Mado was a police informer.

This comes close on the heels of similar incidents on December 4 when two former sarpanches, one of them a BJP worker, were killed by Naxalites in separate places in Bijapur district and on December 6, when a woman anganwadi assistant was murdered in the district. Another woman was strangled to death by Maoists on December 7.

People in the interior villages of Chhattisgarh depend on last-mile workers who are critical for service delivery. SHUBHOMOY SIKDAR

In almost all of these cases, it was said that the victim was a police informer. The murders were carried out by militia cadres in plainclothes, according to the police.

In four of those, the police have identified militia members involved who execute the orders for the Maoists.

Panchayat elections

Data show that of the 68 civilians killed by the Maoists this year, nearly half, or 32, were from Bijapur. There have been past waves of such killings too around panchayat elections and other such events, but this time, police officers feel the trigger is different.

Notably, 207 Maoists have been killed this year, the highest tally since 2001.

The party base of the Maoists has traditionally been strong in the Gangloor area of Bijapur which is why it has been a key recruitment centre.

With the State cracking down on the outlaws with continuous anti-Maoist operations that have left over 200 Maoist cadres dead, police officers believe that in Bijapur, as elsewhere in the affected zone, a frustration is creeping in among the Maoists.

Parents donate body of newborn baby for medical education

This case is likely to be the youngest body donation in India, says an NGO official

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

For Ram Mahra and Nancy, the joy of becoming parents again on December 8 was short-lived as their baby died of a heart ailment just 60 hours after she was born. In the middle of their grief, however, the Uttarakhand couple decided to donate their infant daughter's body for the purpose of medical education and research.

Mr. Mahra, a machine operator who dropped out of school after Class 8, said that he was guided toward body donation by his family doctor who is associated with Dadichi Dehdaan Samiti, an NGO which encourages body and organ donation. This case is likely to be the youngest body donation in the country, according to Krishna Kumar Arora, treasurer of the NGO, who said that a one-week-old baby's body had been previously donated at AIIMS, Delhi.

"As the doctor got to know about the death of my daughter, he asked us if we want to donate her body for medical education purpose. Initially, we were hesitant but then, my wife and I decided to go ahead with it," he said.

A native of Purushottam Nagar village in Haridwar district, Mr. Mahra married Ms. Nancy four years ago. The baby, who died just two-and-a-half days after birth, was their second child. Though the extended family supported the couple in their decision to donate their child's body, the final call was taken by Ms. Nancy.

'Making her immortal'

"I lost my daughter before I could feel her properly. By donating her body, I am making her immortal. She will serve a greater cause for mankind which we couldnt do," said the mother, who is still admitted in the hospital.

The body was donated to the Anatomy Department of Doon Medical College on Wednesday. "The baby, whose parents haven't named her yet, was named Saraswati by the office-bearers of the Dehdaan Samiti. Saraswati is the goddess of knowledge and this baby girl too will help in making students learn the anatomy of a infant through her," said Rajesh Maurya, a doctor in the Anatomy Department.

Indian scientists develop novel gene therapy to provide one-time solution for haemophilia

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Scientists in India have reported success with using gene therapy to treat severe haemophilia A, a rare hereditary condition resulting from a faulty gene which triggers severe, spontaneous, and potentially fatal bleeding episodes.

Though only tested on five patients in Tamil Nadu so far, none of them have reported bleeding episodes over an average follow-up period of 14 months. It is not unusual for those with haemophilia to have weekly bleeding episodes, requiring frequent treatment. The results of the study were reported in the peer-reviewed *New England Journal of Medicine* (NEJM) earlier this week.

Costly affair: Per-patient cost of treating haemophilia in India is reported to be ₹2.54 crore over a 10-year period. GETTY IMAGES

The trial was led by Alok Srivastava of the Centre for Stem Cell Research (CSCR) at the Christian Medical College in Vellore, and financially supported by the Union Department of Biotechnology.

One-time solution

The typical treatment for the condition requires injections at frequent intervals, with infusions of a "clotting factor" to prevent bleeding. Gene therapy treatments, however, promise to be a one-time solution. A gene introduced into the body teaches it to create enough of the clotting factor that can prevent such haemorrhage.

Haemophilia can be classified as minor or severe depending on the percentage of clotting factor present. Haemophilia A, the more common version of the condition, is caused by the absence of a blood-clotting factor called Factor VIII. Even though haemophilia is a rare disorder, India has the world's second-largest patient pool, with an estimated 40,000 to 1,00,000 patients.

Those with Severe Hemophilia A have less than 1% of the clotting factor, and manage the condition with repeated Factor VIII replacement, monoclonal antibodies, or injecting substances that mimic Factor VIII to stop or prevent bleeding. Because of the nature of the condition and the relatively low numbers of patients, treatment can be expensive.

A March 2024 research study in the journal *Heliyon* estimates the per-patient cost of treating a haemophilia patient in India to be $300,000 (or ₹2.54 crore) over a 10-year period.

There is only one gene therapy – Roctavian – which was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for commercial use in 2023. Its effectiveness was established based on results from a cohort of 112 patients followed up for at least three years after Roctavian treatment. Following the infusion, the average bleeding incidents decreased from 5.4 bleeds per year at baseline to 2.6 bleeds per year. The majority of patients who received Roctavian also received corticosteroids to suppress their immune systems for the gene therapy to be effective and safe, according to the U.S. FDA.

This approach, the authors say in their paper, is safer than using an adenovirus.

'India reported half of malaria cases in Southeast Asia in 2023'

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

The World Health Organization (WHO) South East Asia Region contributes about 1.5% of the burden of malaria cases globally and India accounted for about half of all estimated cases in 2023, followed by Indonesia, which carried just under one-third.

Estimated malaria deaths in the region fell by 82.9%, from 35,000 in 2000 to 6,000 in 2023. Together, India and Indonesia accounted for about 88% of malaria deaths in the region.

This is according to the WHO's latest World Malaria Report (2024) released on Wednesday.

The report notes that since 2000, the WHO Southeast Asia Region has made remarkable progress against malaria and estimated malaria cases in the region fell from 22.8 million in 2000 to 4 million in 2023 - a reduction of 82.4%.

A health worker shows a bottle of the malaria vaccine in Yenagoa, Nigeria. AP

"In the period 2022-2023, four countries achieved reductions in their malaria caseload – Bangladesh (-9.2%), India (-9.6%), Indonesia (-5.7%) and Nepal (-58.3%).

Meanwhile, three countries saw case increases – Democratic People's Republic of Korea (+47.9%), Thailand (+46.4%) and Myanmar (45.1%).

In 2023, both Timor-Leste and Bhutan reported zero indigenous cases of malaria.

A reduction in case incidence of 87% was achieved between 2000 and 2023, from 17.7 to 2.3 per 1000 population at risk.

"These gains have been largely attributed to progress in India, which saw 17.7 million fewer estimated cases and a 93% decrease in case incidence since 2000," the report said.

Meanwhile, new data from the WHO revealed that an estimated 2.2 billion cases of malaria and 12.7 million deaths have been averted since 2000, but the disease remains a serious global health threat.

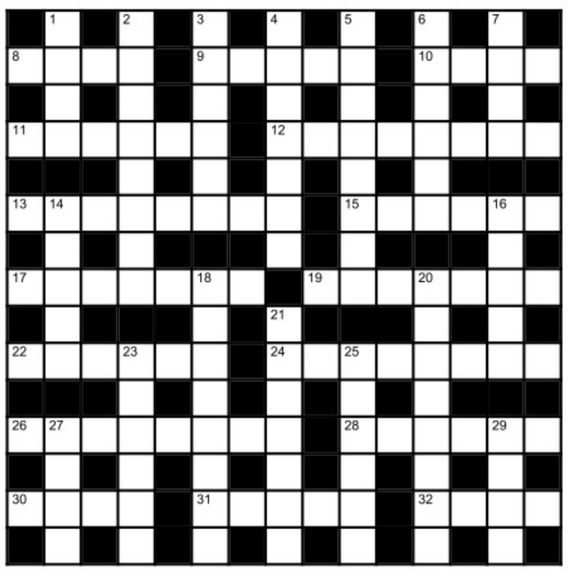
As of November 2024, 44 countries and one territory had been certified malaria-free by WHO.

TH CROSSWORD + 14354

(set by Incognito)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

8 Present American soldier with a foot on his backside (4)
9 Meal available in Kunlun, China (5)
10 Norwegian capital invested in Czechoslovakia (4)
11 Animals found in desolate landscapes (6)
12 Doctors! Be finest to get advantages... (8)
13 Rewrites pages about lubricant material lost due to deterioration in quality (8)
15 Suspend an engineer at last in aircraft parking building (6)
17 Conceals remains behind saint (7)
19 Wing part alien built around part of robot (7)
22 Nobleman and king near top of turret (6)
24 Half of Dumdum's landslip arising from wet, runny soil (8)
26 Summon a bus driven around carrying drunk peon (8)
28 Mix gray with the French diamond pattern (6)
30 Returned last month with European. Give up? (4)
31 Horror story character's machine for lifting bird (5)
32 Bird in Severn estuary (4)

Down

1 Invoice Clinton (4)
2 In America, tinsel is used to make items of kitchen equipment (8)
3 Sadly, to some extent, Kansas' state (6)
4 Gave a cold shoulder and rejected buns kept on mattress (7)
5 Small Chinese hag travels with one in Chinese city (8)
6 A couple of females lie amidst money in Dracula's bed (6)
7 Apartment initially looking awful covered by foot (4)
14/16 Recommend: Add one term to the lexicon, perhaps (3,2,1,4)
18 Settle in tenner forged by Chinese (8)
20 Executive committee records contain upper class sweetheart's poems (8)
21 Limp Alaskan protects animals (7)
23 Rodent's got endless power and is followed by that lady (6)
25 Sketcher rejecting prize (6)
27 American journalist's not new (4)
29 Carry bear having new breathing organ in chest (4)

SUDOKU

		4				5		
3		5					2	6
1			4	3		9		
			1			6	9	
6				5				3
	9	7			6			
		1		4	9			5
4	5					7		2
		6				3		

No.SS6367 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

L	S	B	L	O	J	R		
W	I	N	E	U	S	E	U	P
A	N	O	N	O	T	T	O	P
G	M	A	N	K	A	R	A	P
R	O	C	U	R	E	D	S	N
A	N	A	N	D	O	M	I	N
E	E	R	E	R	R	A	T	A
D	N	I	U	D	I	N	T	E
R	I	M	S	T	R	A	N	G
E	C	N	C	P	E	R	E	A
C	T	S	H	E	L	I	P	O
R	T	E	E	E	A	M	P	U
T	A	T	E	A	W	A	R	D
S	I	G	L	T	D	R	D	A
N	N	A	L	E	A	S	E	E
D	A	M	T	R	S	H	R	D
Y								

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

8	9	6	4	1	7	2	5	3
3	1	2	5	6	9	8	4	7
5	4	7	8	3	2	1	9	6
1	2	5	7	9	4	3	6	8
4	3	8	6	2	1	9	7	5
7	6	9	3	8	5	4	2	1
2	5	3	1	4	6	7	8	9
9	7	1	2	5	8	6	3	4
6	8	4	9	7	3	5	1	2

FAITH

Dispelling darkness

It is easy to dispel earthly darkness by lighting a lamp. How does one overcome inner darkness (ignorance)? To help devotees overcome this problem, God asked His divine weapon *saranga* (bow) to be born on earth and light the lamp of knowledge. Accordingly, *saranga* was born as Tirumangai Azhwar in the Tamil month of Kartigai, under the Kartigai star, said Tirukkudanthai Dr. Venkatesh.

Unlike the other Vaishnavite saints, Tirumangai led an ordinary life. One day, he held up the procession of newly weds, who were none other than Perumal and Thayar. When Tirumangai tried to remove the toe ring of the deity but could not, the brigand bit the metal, but to no avail; and he asked the groom what magic he was wreaking . Perumal took him aside to the shade of a peepal tree and imparted spiritual knowledge. The Narayana mantra (quintessence of the Vedas) thus received, changed the brigand forever and he dedicated himself to the service of the Lord, stealing our hearts with his works. He composed Periya Tirumozhi (1,084 hymns), Tirukkurundandakam (20 verses), Tirunedundantakam (30 verses) , Tiruvezhukkutrirukkai (single poem), Siriya Tirumadal (155 lines) and Periya Tirumadal (297 lines), all of which help dispel ignorance. These works all form a significant portion of Nalayira Divya Prabhandam.

It is believed that he was reborn many times, including as Nampillai and Asukavi Villurswami (born under same star). During the month of Kartigai (from December 8 to 14), at the pavitrotsavam of Rama at Vaduvur, the Lord smilingly listens to the discourse on Villurswami's Sanskrit composition on His smile.

INBRIEF

New Camry hybrid electric launched at ₹48 lakh

Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) announced the India unveiling of its Camry hybrid electric sedan on Wednesday, priced at ₹48 lakh (ex-showroom). The firm said the car is equipped with advanced 5th generation hybrid technology, delivering significantly improved efficiency and enhanced performance. Masakazu Yoshimura, MD and CEO, TKM, said, "Our product strategy aligns with India's priorities to lower carbon emissions and achieve energy security goals."

MobiKwik's IPO sold out in first hour as investors rush in

One MobiKwik Systems' IPO of ₹572 crore got fully subscribed within an hour of opening of the issue on Wednesday. The initial share sale received bids for 2.16 shares, as against 1.18 crore on offer, translating into 1.82 times subscription, as per data available with NSE till 11:40 hours. Retail Individual Investors subscribed 7.69 times, while the Non-Institutional Investors received 1.55 times subscription. The IPO is available for public subscription till December 13. PTI

Top shareholders offer to take India's Renew Energy private

A group of shareholders, including Renew Energy's founder Sumant Sinha and major investment firms, has proposed taking the company private by offering $7.07 per share, a premium of 11.5% to the stock's last close, an SEC filing showed on Tuesday. This move comes as Renew's market capitalisation is $2.37 billion, and its shares have dropped 36% since its February 2021 listing. REUTERS

RBI Governor Malhotra vows best batting stance in public interest

Taking charge at Mint Street, the cricket-loving new central bank boss steers clears of outswingers on growth and inflation, vows to play with a straight bat after getting a flavour of the pitch; says focus would be on continuity, stability and certainty

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

New Innings: Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra took charge as the 26th Governor of RBI for the next three years on Wednesday. ANI

The 26th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Sanjay Malhotra took charge of Mint Street on Wednesday, opening his account with a straight bat, committing to uphold and strengthen public trust in the central bank while maintaining a sense of continuity and the commitment to take appropriate decisions at the right time in public interest.

"I can assure you that we will put the best foot forward in public interest to deliver what the public of India looks forward to, which is trust, growth, stability and certainty in policy," Mr. Malhotra said.

The computer science engineer turned bureaucrat, who was named the new banking regulator this Monday, said emphasis would be placed on technology and innovations to enhance financial inclusion and expansion.

A cricket lover and coffee aficionado Mr. Malhotra, in his first press conference as Governor, shied away from commenting on issues like growth and inflation. He said, "It is my first day and so if I start playing my shots from day one, from ball one, I don't think it will be appropriate on my part."

Agile to challenges

Mr. Malhotra said that while maintaining continuity and stability, the RBI would be alert and agile to challenges.

Mr. Malhotra, who is learnt to have been briefed about his appointment hours before it was made public, said it was "an honor to head this august institution and a huge responsibility" and that he would continue to uphold the legacy of the RBI.

With this appointment Mr. Malhotra, a Punjabi, who was born, raised and has worked in North India, will make Mumbai his home for at least three years and gain a first-hand experience of what makes the port city and India's financial capital tick.

Highlighting RBI's 90th anniversary theme of stability, trust and growth, he said these were pertinent for the economy. Noting the RBI has done a tremendous job in monetary policy management and financial inclusion, he said one needs to be conscious that one does not have a monopoly on all knowledge, so external expertise should also be tapped.

Wars spurring inflation, Govts. must borrow responsibly: Finance Minister

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

Nirmala Sitharaman

The spate of wars and skirmishes around the world are fuelling inflation across the globe, so restoring normalcy is vital for avoiding supply chain disruptions and letting economies thrive without such extraneous challenges, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Wednesday.

Speaking at the Global Economic Policy Forum hosted by CII, the Minister also signalled the need for States to be responsible in their borrowing plans, and stressed that addressing the mounting intergenerational debt is a priority.

"Responsible economies cannot be run with borrowings so large that the next generation and the generation after that already knows what it is liable to repay. After all, that will have to be passed through as taxation, as you are not going to be able to generate that resource to pay back the debt that you have taken," she said.

"It is absolutely important for governments and for industry to work together to see how best debt can be managed at the national, and I hate using this word, but I would say at the sub-national level, I mean the federal and the provincial level, it is important for us to manage our debt," she underlined.

Sri Lanka: Adani Ports drops $0.5 bn U.S. loan plea

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Adani Ports & Special Economic Zone Ltd. (APSEZ) has withdrawn the $553 million loan request from the U.S. Development Finance Corporation and instead has decided to fund the Colombo West International Terminal (CWIT) from internal sources.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	WEDNESDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	81,526	0.02
US Dollar	84.83	0.02
Gold	80,400	0.77
Brent oil	73.03	0.52

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	2457.25	-9.95
Adani Ports	1233.80	-14.95
Apollo Hosp	7340.80	82.50
Asian Paints	2417.30	28.40
Axis Bank	1147.25	-6.40
Bajaj Auto	9069.85	56.55
Bajaj Finserv	1686.50	23.10
Bajaj Finance	7115.10	178.90
Bharat Elec	314.10	-0.75
Bharti Airtel	1586.00	7.35
BPCL	307.45	3.95
Britannia Ind	4889.50	102.25
Cipla	1454.10	-1.10
Coal India	416.95	2.90
Dr Reddys Lab	1238.55	-1.80
Eicher Motors	4801.95	-11.10
Grasim Ind	2670.75	15.45
HCL Tech	1930.90	-5.45
HDFC Bank	1863.10	-5.00
HDFC Life	634.65	1.35
Hero MotoCorp	4650.45	62.15
Hindalco	670.50	1.60
Hind Unilever	2401.35	4.00
ICICI Bank	1327.50	-2.95
IndusInd Bank	984.85	0.55
Infosys	1974.15	25.60
ITC	465.25	-0.20
JSW Steel	1000.20	-12.75
Kotak Bank	1794.70	0.00
L&T	3916.75	-6.40
M&M	3072.05	5.15
Maruti Suzuki	11277.75	79.55
NestleIndia	2241.05	26.60
NTPC	365.50	-3.65
ONGC	256.60	-0.30
PowerGrid Corp	327.55	-0.35
Reliance Ind	1278.20	-6.65
SBI Life	1456.15	-5.70
State Bank	861.60	-5.90
Shriram Finance Ltd.	3248.25	61.75
Sun Pharma	1814.00	4.05
TataConsumerProduct	935.05	8.30
Tata Motors	799.10	-0.80
Tata Steel	150.60	0.28
TCS	4427.45	-5.10
Tech Mahindra	1762.80	-0.75
Titan	3473.10	-2.65
Trent Ltd.	7063.30	185.25
UltraTech Cement	11898.50	152.70
Wipro	309.00	0.90

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on December 11

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	84.63	84.95
Euro	88.86	89.20
British Pound	107.73	108.14
Japanese Yen (100)	55.45	55.66
Chinese Yuan	11.64	11.69
Swiss Franc	95.77	96.14
Singapore Dollar	62.96	63.21
Canadian Dollar	59.66	59.89
Malaysian Ringitt	19.08	19.18
Australian Dollar	53.73	53.94

Source:Indian Bank

CCI may tackle staff poaching by Big Tech

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

India's anti-trust watchdog said Wednesday it is open to taking action to protect smaller companies if big digital platforms try to poach their talent ranks working on areas like Artificial Intelligence (AI), as similar poaching practices are being seen in developed markets like the United States and the European Union.

"When you are looking at multi-faceted markets, consumer welfare may indicate something different, whereas what is impacting other stakeholders like your startups, small enterprises, they may need a different dispensation," the Competition Commission of India chairperson Ravneet Kaur said, adding this makes their role quite challenging as they have to balance these two aspects.

Ms. Kaur said there are concerns about "poaching of staff" by "big gatekeepers" and digital platforms that have a first mover advantage in the EU and U.S.

"Even in the case of AI, they are poaching upon staff of small startups and companies working on generative AI. We have so far not looked at anything of that sort here. But if there is a requirement that they are trying to escape notification before the Commission and do this kind of a thing, then maybe that context will also be looked at," the CCI chief said.

Coca-Cola to sell 40% of its stake in India to Jubilant Bhartia Group

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Global beverage major Coca-Cola on Wednesday announced sale of 40% stake in its India bottling business Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages Pvt Ltd (HCCBL) to Jubilant Bhartia Group.

Though the company has not disclosed the amount of the deal, some media reports have pegged it at around ₹10,000 crore for 40% stake in Hindustan Coca-Cola Holdings.

The Bhartia family-led group in a statement said "they have entered into a definitive agreement for a strategic investment whereby Jubilant Bhartia Group will be acquiring a 40% equity interest in Hindustan Coca-Cola Holdings Pvt Ltd, India (HCCH) through its entity Jubilant Beverages Limited". The transaction is subject to regulatory approval.

This deal is a part of The Coca-Cola Company's strategy to divest its stake in bottling operations globally as per its asset-light strategy.

"With its diverse experience in various sectors, Jubilant brings decades of rich experience that will help accelerate the Coca-Cola system, enabling us to win in the market and provide greater value to local communities and consumers," Coca-Cola India President Sanket Ray said.

Soban Singh Jeena Government Institute of Medical Science & Research Almora
Near Vikas Bhawan, Pandeykhola, Almora, Distt-Almora-263601 (Uttarakhand)
e-mail- principal.gmcalmora@gmail.com,
Website- http://www.ssjgimsralmora.org & Mob. No. +91 9412410759
GSTIN : 05AAAGS2989B1ZA PAN : AAAGS2989B TAN : MRTS16286E

Letter No.:- 114/G.M.C.A./G-1/Advertisement Date:- 11th December, 2024

Walk-In-Interview

"Walk In interview" against vacant posts of **"Senior Resident and Junior Resident"** on Contractual basis as per departmental requirement for 01 (one) year which can be extended for a maximum of 03 years, which will be held from 16th December, 2024 at 10:00 am daily (except on public holidays) at the **office of the Principal, Soban Singh Jeena Government Institute of Medical Science & Research, Almora, Near Vikas Bhawan, Pandeykhola, Almora, Distt.-Almora, Uttarakhand-263601".**

fixed honorarium :
Senior Resident all Departments. - **Rs. 90,350/- per month**
Senior Resident, Department of Radiology- **Rs. 2,00,000/- per month plus 10% annual increment.**
Junior Resident all Departments - **Rs. 76,600/- per month**
- Educational qualification and age as per NMC norms.
- Reservation - As per the Uttarakhand Government order.

Principal
SSJ Govt. IMSR Almora
Almora.

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT,
MAHARANA BHUPAL GOVT. HOSPITAL, UDAIPUR
क्रमांकः एस.ओ./क्रय-1/ /एफ गॉज-बैण्डेज/ई-निविदा/2024/ दिनांकः .....

Notice Inviting Bid 28/5.12.2024
NIB No.: GHU2425A0034

Bids for below works in M.B. Govt. Hospital, Udaipur are invited from interested bidders for S.No. 1- upto 05.00 PM dated 27.12.2024 other Particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (**http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.raj.nic.in**) of the state.

S. No.	Details	UBN No.
1	अधीक्षक महाराणा भूपाल राजकीय चिकित्सालय, उदयपुर में Rate Contract for Gauze Than and Bandage उपलब्ध कराने हेतु निविदा।	(GHU2425 GLRC00063)

DIPR/C/12601/2024 **Superintendent, M.B. Govt. Hospital, Udaipur**

TELANGANA CO-OPERATIVE MARKETING FEDERATION LTD.
Email: proc.tsmarkfed2018@gmail.com, Ph.No: 040-2460 7108, Fax: 040-2460 7100

Rc.No.E-707600/P&M/ Disposal of Jowar/2023-24 Date:11.12.2024

TENDER FOR SALE OF JOWAR (HYBRID) YASANGI 2023-24 PROCURED BY TG MARKFED

Tender notification for online sealed e-tendering in two bid systems (i.e Pre-qualification bid and Commercial Bid) for Disposal of Jowar (Hybrid) Yasangi 2023-24 for the total quantity of 94990.371(Gross weight) in two equated lots procured by TG MARKFED on tender platform http://tender.telangana.gov.in

a. Bid Submission Start date	12.12.2024 from 03:00 PM
b. Bid Submission end date	21.12.2024 up to 05:00 PM
c. Opening of pre-Qualification bid on	23.12.2024 from 11:00 AM
d. Opening of Commercial bid on	23.12.2024 at 03:00 PM

For online registration and further technical support please contact Service providers Ph: 7337445545 / 6309339690 / 7337445546 / 9912756216.
For further details please contact. Ph: 7288879806, and 7288879829

DIPR RO.No. 777-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2024-25 Sd/- Managing Director

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD
Office of the Chief Engineer (Project), 3rd Floor,
Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru - 560009

IFT No.: BWSSB/CE(P)/ACE(P)-2/1817/2024-25 Date: 10-12-2024

INVITATION FOR TENDER-2nd Call
(Only through KPP-Portal)

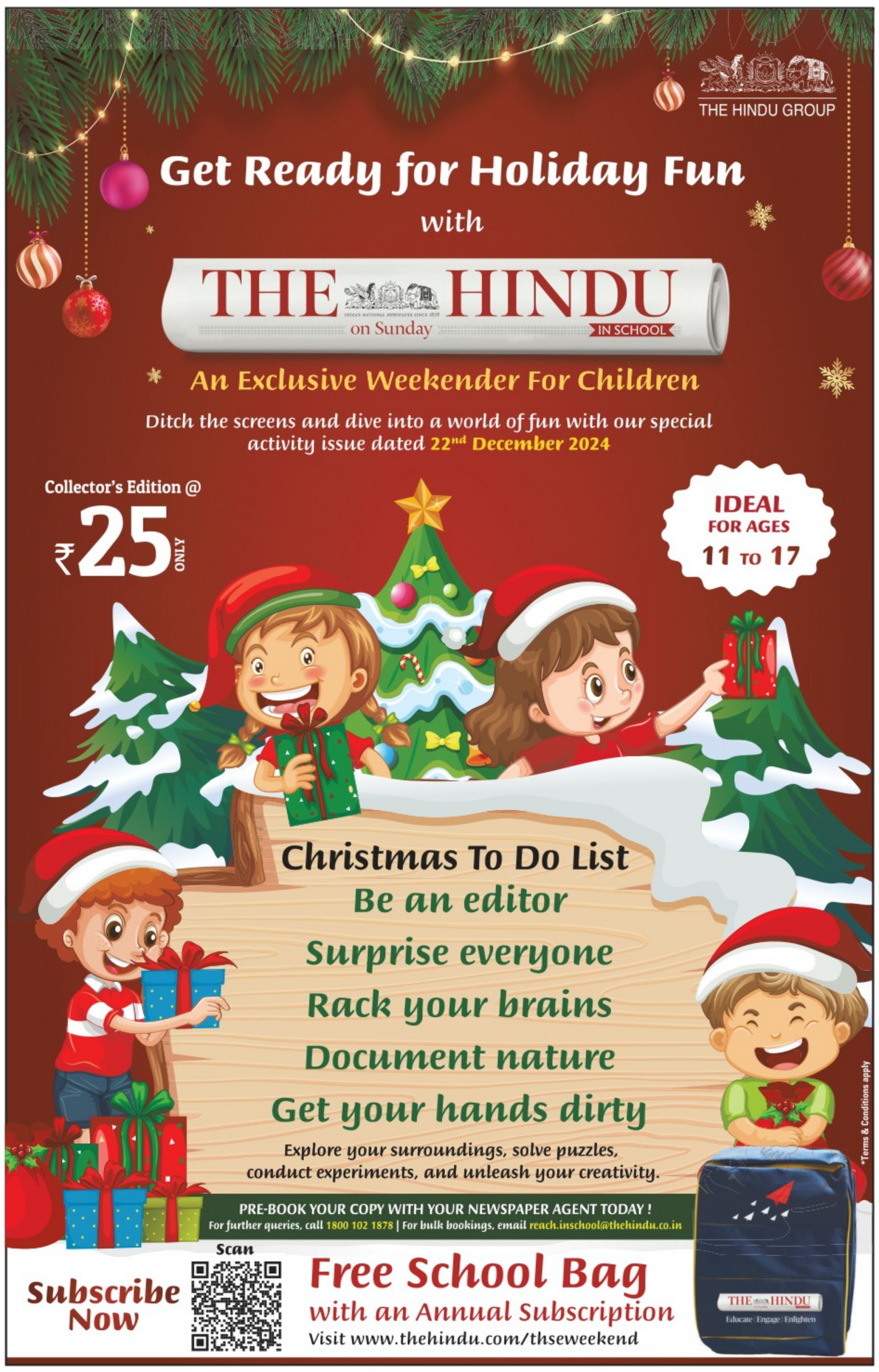
BWSSB, invites tender in two stage tender system from eligible contractors for the work of **Transaction advisory services for selection of an agency for the proposed projects under Public Private Partnership(PPP) model for biogas-based revenue generation and carbon credits.**

Amount put to tender: Rs.179.26 Lakhs. EMD: Rs.2.69 Lakhs.

Last date and time for receipt of tenders will be on **26.12.2024 upto 16:30 hrs**. The Tenders will be opened on **27.12.2024 after 17:00 hrs**.

The Details regarding the tender participation in the e-Procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

Sd/-
DIPR/CP/BCPL/3728/2024-25 **Chief Engineer (Project)**



DEIR AL-BALAH

Israeli strikes on Gaza home and refugee camp kill 29 people

AFP

Israeli strikes pounded Gaza overnight and into Wednesday, hitting a home where displaced people were sheltering in the isolated north and a built-up refugee camp. At least 29 people were killed. Militants in central Gaza meanwhile fired four projectiles into Israel on Wednesday, two of which were intercepted, the military said. AP

DHAKA

BNP workers hold protest march as tensions continue with India

AP

Thousands of members of youth and student bodies belonging to the Bangladesh Nationalist Party on Wednesday held a road march from Dhaka toward its eastern border with India to protest against an attack on a diplomatic mission earlier this month and alleged desecration of Bangladeshi flags in India. AP

SEOUL

South Korean police blocked from raiding President Yoon's office

AP

South Korean police said security guards were blocking a raid on President Yoon Suk Yeol's offices to investigate his brief imposition of martial law, with the opposition accusing his staff of protecting an insurrectionist. Meanwhile, Defence Minister Kim Yong-hyun was stopped from attempting suicide while in detention. AP

BANGKOK

Myanmar ethnic armed group claims control of border region

AP

A Myanmar ethnic armed group claimed complete control of a key region along the Bangladesh border, piling further pressure on the junta battling opponents elsewhere across the country. The Arakan Army said late on Tuesday it had complete control over Maungdaw — a district that is home to 1,10,000 people. AFP

Ukraine crisis bigger priority than West Asia, says Trump

U.S. President-elect says Moscow and Kyiv are losing thousands of soldiers, while calling the Gaza war and its fallout a 'less difficult situation'; Trump says Syria will have to take care of itself

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

Peacemaker: Donald Trump met Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelenskyy during his visit to France on Saturday. AFP

Donald Trump said solving the Ukraine crisis would be his top priority once he assumes office next month, describing West Asia as a "less difficult situation."

"I think we have to solve the Ukraine problem with Russia," the U.S. President-elect told French magazine *Paris Match* in an interview recorded on Saturday and released on Wednesday.

"Both those countries are losing numbers that nobody can believe. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers are being killed," Mr. Trump said, replying to a question about his top priority on the international stage.

"And the Middle East [West Asia] is of course a big priority. But I think that the Middle East [West Asia] is a less difficult situation than Ukraine with Russia," Mr. Trump said.

Mr. Trump flew to Paris for the Saturday reopening of Notre Dame Cathedral following a devastating fire in 2019. He met with French President Emmanuel Macron and Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelenskyy during his visit to France, his first international trip since his re-election.

On Tuesday, Mr. Zelenskyy said he was grateful for Mr. Trump's "strong resolve" to end the war in Ukraine.

He also reiterated his call for Washington not to intervene in Syria where longtime president Bashar al-Assad was toppled by rebels in a lightning offensive at the weekend. "Syria will have to take care of itself," Mr. Trump said

How Ba'ath Party's six-decade-long rule in Syria came to a crashing end

NEWS ANALYSIS

Stanly Johny

No challenge: HTS and SNA militants faced little resistance from the Army when they advanced towards Aleppo. AFP

The Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), the Syrian Islamist militant group, had been preparing for months for a large-scale offensive against the forces of Bashar al-Assad. The HTS, formerly called al-Nusra Front, the Syrian arm of al-Qaeda, had built a statelet in northwestern Syria's Idlib under the leadership of its 'emir', Abu Muhammed al-Jolani. The HTS and its ally Syrian National Army (SNA) had informed Turkiye, their patron, at least six months ago about the offensive plan, according to a *Reuters* report.

Mr. Assad's troops were in a bad shape. Soldiers were poorly paid and lacked motivation. Under crippling American sanctions, its finances were in shambles. During the peak of the civil war, in 2015-16, Mr. Assad had heavily relied on his external allies for security – Russia, Iran and Hezbollah. Now, the situation was different. The Russians were focused on Ukraine. Iran lost a host of its Syria commanders to Israeli strikes. Hezbollah had been weakened in a year-long war with Israel.

The HTS launched its offensive on November 27, the day Israel and Lebanon signed a ceasefire. On the 12th day, the Assad regime fell.

Offensive begins

When they launched the offensive, the militants' initial target was the western suburbs of Aleppo, Syria's second largest city. When HTS and SNA militants advanced towards Aleppo, they faced little resistance from government forces. Within four days, they reached Aleppo's city centre.

The rapid collapse of government forces in Aleppo stunned both the militants and the regime alike. The HTS's victory triggered rebellion elsewhere in the country. In the south, local militias, who were backed by Jordan, started attacking government positions. In the northeast, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a Kurdish militia, started advancing towards the eastern city of Deir Ezzour. The HTS, the main militant group, marched south from Aleppo towards Hama. On December 5, they entered Hama.

Mr. Assad turned to Iran and Russia for help. But Syrian and other Arab officials say both Russia and Iran told the Syrian President that they could not help him much this time.

Mr. Assad's circle was shrinking. His troops were not fighting back. He was not getting any external help. The militants were on a march from multiple fronts. From Hama, the HTS advanced towards Homs, a strategically important city that sits at an intersection between Syria's Mediterranean coast and Damascus, the seat of power. On December 7, HTS-linked militants entered Homs. The next day, the Southern Front, militants from the south who had already taken Daara, entered Damascus first, followed by the HTS. Syria's Prime Minister Muhammad al-Jalali said he would ensure a peaceful transition of power, bringing the 60-year rule of the Socialist Ba'ath Party in Syria to a dramatic end.

Different rebel groups

The fall of the regime leaves a huge vacuum in Syria. Today, there are four major rebel coalitions in the country. First, the HTS, led by Jolani.HTS telegram channels already call him 'President' Shara, referring to his real name, Ahmed Hussein al-Shara. The HTS has built a government in Idlib and has some 25,000 soldiers under its command. But that may not be enough to run a vast country like Syria. The HTS certainly wants to play a key role in the new Syria, and has sent reconciliatory messages to the country's different sects and militias. The SNA is an ally of the HTS and a proxy of Turkiye.

Second, the local militias in the south. That they entered Damascus first was a clear message to Jolani that he was not the only 'rebel' in the game. Third, is the SDF, the Kurdish militia. In the northeast, the Kurds have enjoyed relative autonomy since the beginning of the civil war. But Turkiye was alarmed by the Kurds's growing strength and had launched incursions into Syria in the past, grabbing territories on the border. .

And finally, there are the Alawites, Mr. Assad's sect who live mostly in the mountainous coastal regions of Latakia and Tartus, and has enjoyed power for nearly 50 years. The Alawites were the backbone of the Syrian Army. They are unlikely to immediately trust Jolani, a committed Salafi Islamist militant, whose group in the past had carried out targeted attacks against Alawites.

Syria is a diverse country. It now has a diverse set of militias, without a central authority. And then there are external players. Turkiye, as the main supporter of northern militias (HTS and SNA), would seek to extend its influence in the government formation.

Jordan would like to see the southern militias getting their due. The Gulf Arabs, who are wary of both Islamists and Turkiye, would be alarmed by the developments. Iran risks losing its territorial link with Hezbollah. Russia's primary objective would be to safeguard its Tartus naval base and Khmeimim air base. And Israel has already sent troops to capture land in Syria's Golan Heights and is carrying out massive air strikes aimed at destroying Syria's military capabilities.

Rights of all religious groups guaranteed, says Syria's new PM

Agence France-Presse
DAMASCUS

Syria's new Prime Minister said the Islamist-led alliance that ousted President Bashar al-Assad will "guarantee" the rights of all religious groups and called on the millions who fled the war to return home.

Mr. Assad fled Syria after a lightning offensive spearheaded by the Islamist Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) group and its allies, which brought to a spectacular end five decades of brutal rule by his clan.

"Precisely because we are Islamic, we will guarantee the rights of all people and all sects in Syria," said Mohammad al-Bashir, whom the militants appointed as the transitional head of government.

Asked whether Syria's new constitution would be Islamic, he told Italian daily *Corriere della Sera* that "we will clarify all these details during the constituent process". Mr. Bashir is tasked with heading the multi-ethnic, multi-sectarian country until March 1.

Minister for Refugees in Afghan Taliban killed in suicide blast

Agence France-Presse
KABUL

The attack on the Minister – the first since Taliban came to power – has been blamed on IS

The Afghan Minister for Refugees was killed on Wednesday in a suicide bombing at the ministry's offices in the capital Kabul, government sources said, blaming the Islamic State group for the attack which has not been claimed.

Taliban government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid deplored "a cowardly attack" carried out by the Islamic State (IS) group, saluting a "great fighter" who "fell as a martyr".

The explosion, which was the first attack targeting a Minister since the Taliban returned to power in 2021, "happened at the Ministry for Refugees and minister Khalil Ur-Rahman Haqqani has been martyred along with some of his colleagues," a government source said.

Sport

Four meet records rewritten on concluding day

ATHLETICS

Y.B. Sarangi
BHUBANESWAR

Impressive: Odisha's Maharana clocked his personal best (21.28) while claiming the win. BISWARANJAN ROUT

Local favourite Pratik Maharana defied a sore back to script a new meet record while securing the under-18 men's 200m gold medal on the concluding day of the National junior athletics championships at the Kalinga Stadium here on Wednesday.

Running in good rhythm, Maharana held on to his lead confidently as he lowered his personal best from 21.41, clocked at the South Asian junior meet in Chennai in September, to 21.28 to record an impressive victory.

"I did light training to balance my rehab and preparation for this competition. I was aiming for the National record (21.08), but had to settle for the meet record," said 17-year-old Maharana, training at Rourkela.

Sumit Rathee (8:45.75) won by a margin of more than 11 seconds while leading a pack of four runners, who smashed the meet record in under-20 men's 3000m steeplechase.

National record holder Deepika (52.45m) rewrote the meet record with her second throw as she claimed the under-20 women's javelin title.

Sakshi Chavan, who took the under-20 100m gold, switched to under-18 200m to pick up her second gold with a meet record (24.14).

Homeboy Dondapati Mrutyam Jayaram - who added the under-20 200m crown to his 100m title - and Prachi Devkar, making her National debut in the 3000m steeplechase after winning the 5000m yellow metal, also snatched their second gold medals.

Haryana took the team championships in both men and women.

The results: Winners only:

Under-20: Men:
200m: Dondapati Mrutyam Jayaram (Odi) 21.27, **800m:** Bejoy K. (Ker) 1:50.84; **400m hurdles:** Arjun Pradeep (Ker) 51.75; **3000m steeplechase:** Sumit Rathee (Har) 8:45.75 (NMR, Old, 9:00.66, Gaurav Yadav, 2023); **4x400m relay:** Tamil Nadu 3:46.01; **Triple jump:** Mohammed Muhassin (Ker) 15.78m; **Javelin:** Rohan Yadav (UP) 69.73m.

Women: 200m: Sakshi Chavan (Guj) 24.14 (NMR, Old, 24.24, Jisna Mathew, 2017); **800m:** Laxmipriya Kisan (Odi) 2:14.44; **400m hurdles:** Sreevarthani S.K. (TN) 1:00.61; **3000m steeplechase:** Prachi Devkar (Mah) 10:41.07; **4x400m relay:** Tamil Nadu 3:13.53; **Triple jump:** Rishika Awasthi (UP) 12.37m; **Javelin:** Deepika (Har) 52.46 (NMR, Old, 49.05, Pushpa Jakhar, 2016).

Under-18: Men: 200m: Pratik Maharana (Odi) 21.28 (NMR, Old, 21.34, Shanmuga Srinivas, 2019); **Shot put:** Ommkar Prasad Nanda (Odi) 19.96m; **Women: 200m:** Nipam (UP) 24.74.

Best athletes: U-20: Men: Jay Kumar (400m), **Women:** Sakshi Chavan (200m); **U-18: Men:** Kiran K. (110m hurdles), **Women:** Abinaya Rajarajan (100m); **U-16: Boys:** Dhairya Bhanderi (javelin), **Girls:** Shourya Ambure (60m); **U-14: Boys:** Bhiky Barman (javelin), **Girls:** Minakshi (javelin).

AFI bringing in drastic changes

Y.B. Sarangi
BHUBANESWAR

Looking forward to the Los Angeles Olympics, the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) is all set to give promising athletes a chance with an aim to raise the performance of the men's 4x400m relay team. The team, which reached the 2023 World championships by setting an Asian record of 2:59.05, disappointed at the Paris Games, crashed out in the heats with a below-par time of 3:00.26.

The AFI, which backed the relay team well with the support from the Government, is not shy of taking hard decisions. "They did well at the World championships, breaking the Asian record. I think it went to their head...You are going to see new faces and new coaches," AFI president Adille Sumariwalla told *The Hindu* here.

Sumariwalla was also disappointed with steeplechaser Avinash Sable's performance in the Olympics.

The AFI is taking several measures to lift Indian athletes' performance in bigger meets, such as the 2027 World championships and 2028 Olympics.

"We are getting a new javelin coach apart from Neeraj's coach (Jan Zelezny) to India. We are looking at getting one more foreign coach in the 400m. We are planning to send our walkers abroad for training. We are not going to have camps. We are helping all the institutions to create their own champions, except for the relays."

Sumariwalla said India is bidding to host international events, including a javelin competition, a continental tour event, World Relays, World junior championships and the 2029 World championships.

Taking note of several exceptional performances in the National junior meet here, Sumariwalla agreed that some of these could be a cause for concern.

"If they are under-14 or under-16, definitely it's a cause for concern. It's something which we have been fighting for a long time – overtraining and early specialisation. That is why we are producing more and more new coaches."

The AFI is planning to add 10 more events, including some regional competitions, to the 2025 calendar.

SALUTING A LEGEND

Gukesh wishes Anand on his 55th birthday, calls him 'an inspiration'

FIDE

It may not have been a perfect day for D. Gukesh, but he didn't forget to wish Viswanathan Anand who now mentors him and other Indian prodigies, a happy birthday. "He has been an inspiration and a role model for me and millions of others," said Gukesh while wishing the legend on his 55th birthday.

THE GAMEPLAN

'Will continue my career, but maybe play fewer tournaments'

FIDE

Regardless of what happens in this World championship — whether he retains the crown or not — Ding Liren said he would continue to play chess. To a question after Game 13, in which he earned a draw, the Chinese said: "I think I will continue my career, but maybe play fewer tournaments, more rapid and blitz than classical."

FORMALITY

FIFA announces the hosts for the 2030 and 2034 men's World Cups

GETTY IMAGES

Saudi Arabia will host the men's football World Cup in 2034 while the 2030 edition will be held in Spain, Portugal and Morocco, FIFA President Gianni Infantino announced following a virtual extraordinary Congress. With both the editions having only a single bid, they were confirmed by acclamation.

BOOKING A SPOT

Steelers prove too hot for Bulls, become first team to qualify

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Haryana Steelers confirmed its playoff berth after a resounding 37-26 victory over Bengaluru Bulls in their PKL 11 match in Pune on Wednesday. For Steelers, Vinay and Shivam Patare combined for 15 points, and Mohammadreza Shadloui scored six points. U Mumba eased past Tamil Thalaivas 47-31 in the other match.

It all comes down to the final day after Game 13 ends in draw

With less than five minutes to make 10 moves, Ding finds the only one that will salvage his position from a possibly devastating defeat at such a stage of the match; if there's another stalemate in Game 14, tie-breaks will be played

FIDE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SINGAPORE 2024

P.K. Ajith Kumar
SINGAPORE

Top-notch defence: Ding's inner Houdini made an appearance yet again against Gukesh. FIDE

If Ding Liren needed some background music at the World chess championship, a song in Tamil – one of the official languages here in Singapore – would be a top contender: Anuradha Sriram's *Karuppu thaan enakku pidicha colouru (The colour I like is black)*.

But for a blip in Game 11, in which he lost with black pieces, Ding has been superb with the colour usually less favoured in chess. A draw with black pieces is considered worthier than with white. It is almost priceless when you could do it in the penultimate round of a keenly-fought, still tied World championship.

So with just one game remaining in the classical format, the match is tied 6.5-6.5 at World Resorts Sentosa. The situation is simple after Game 13 ended in a draw.

On Thursday, the winner of Game 14 will become the World champion. If it is a draw, the tie-breaks of speed chess will be played on the following day.

On Wednesday, when he had less than five minutes to make 10 moves, Ding found the only one that could salvage his position. He had to move his rook to the 'f8'square. Any other move would have led to a possibly devastating defeat at such a stage of the match with just one game remaining.

So, he found 31...Rf8.

Not for the first time, Ding's inner Houdini made an appearance. His defence has been top-notch here.

Ding is the defending champion in more ways than one. After he found the right defence, he was able to complete the 40 moves in the first time control.

He has struggled to do that for much of the match. It was no different in Game 13.

And Gukesh had come up with an opening surprise even before the opening. He arrived at the venue earlier than Ding, who had joked earlier about having to wait for his rival to arrive every day.

He opened by pushing his King's pawn by two squares (1. e4), something he had done in the first game, which he had lost. As was the case in that game, Ding replied with French Defence.

Gukesh got an opportunity to put Ding in deep trouble after the latter erred with his queen on the 30th move. But the Chennai youngster missed the crucial rook exchange, and then Ding came up with that game-saving move with his rook.

It was going to be a draw from then on. And it was, after 68 moves, with a rook-and-pawn ending.

GAME 13: MOVES

Gukesh vs Ding

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. e5 Nfd7 5. Nce2 c5 6. c3 Nc6 7. a3 Be7 8. Be3 Nb6 9. Nf4 cxd4 10.cxd4 Nc4 11. Bxc4 dxc4 12. Nge2 b5 13. 0–0 0–0 14. Nc3 Rb8 15. Nh5 f5 16. exf6 Bxf6 17. Qf3 Qe8 18. Nxf6+ Rxf6 19. Qe2 Qg6 20. f3 Rf8 21. Rad1 Ne7 22. Bf4 Rb6 23. Bc7 Rb7 24. Bd6 Re8 25. Bxe7 Rexe7 26. Qe5 a6 27. d5 exd5 28. Qxd5+ Qe6 29. Qc5 Re8 30. Rde1 Qf7 31. Ne4 Rf8

32. Nd6 Rc7 33. Qe5 Qf6 34. Qd5+ Kh8 35. Re5 Re7 36. Rfe1 Rxe5 37. Rxe5 h6 38. Qc5 Bd7 39. Ne4 Qf4 40. Re7 Bf5 41. Qd4 Rg8 42. h3 Qc1+ 43. Kf2 Bxe4 44. Rxe4 c3 45. bxc3 Qxa3 46. Kg3 Qb3 47. Re7 a5 48. Rb7 Qc4 49. Qe5 Qc6 50. Qxb5 Qxc3 51. Ra7 Qe1+ 52. Kh2 Qb4 53. Qxb4 axb4 54. Rb7 Ra8 55. Rxb4 Ra2 56. Kg3 Kh7 57. Rb5 Kg6 58. f4 Kf6 59. Kf3 Rc2 60. g3 Rc3+ 61. Kg4 Ra3 62. h4 Rc3 63. Rb6+ Kf7 64. f5 h5+ 65. Kf4 Rc4+ 66. Kf3 Rc3+ 67. Kf4 Rc4+ 68. Kf3 Rc3+

Game drawn

Agassi praises Alcaraz, but with a sprinkling of caution

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

A mix of the Big Three: Agassi feels Alcaraz defends like Djokovic, has power and spin like Nadal, and has hands and finesse like Federer. FILE PHOTO: VIVEK BENDRE

What sportspersons covet the most is the respect of their peers and appreciation from past champions. In a short career, Carlos Alcaraz has received plenty of it, and on Wednesday, he got another healthy dose from none other than Andre Agassi, albeit with a sprinkling of caution.

"Alcaraz defends like Novak [Djokovic], has power and spin like [Rafael] Nadal, and has hands and finesse like [Roger] Federer," said Agassi on the sidelines of the TiE Global Summit 2024 here. "But just because he has the best of all three doesn't mean he can do what they did. Decision-making, injuries and luck... there are so many things".

But one thing everyone will agree on is that Alcaraz, along with Jannik Sinner, has ushered in a brand-new era. And after Nadal's retirement, 24-time Slam winner Djokovic is the last man standing from the previous generation.

"I think he'll run out of energy more than capability, especially when the people you came to the dance with have left," Agassi said of Djokovic. "When Pete [Sampras] retired, I had to rediscover my inspiration. Djokovic has lost the guys he made history with. Emotionally it's tougher. But I would never bet against him".

Agassi was part of a golden generation of American singles players in the 1990s that won multiple Majors. But since Andy Roddick at the 2003 US Open, the United States hasn't had one. The eight-time Slam winner, however, believes this could soon change.

"We [have] got five guys in the top 20 [sic: 25], and I think you need each other to succeed. In my group, I was the first one to turn professional, and I made [Michael] Chang, Pete, [Jim] Courier believe.

"Chang was the first one to win [1989 French Open]. He made Pete believe that he could win. He then made Courier believe. And Courier said, 'well, I can be No. 1 in the world'. We all helped each other, and I think these Americans are now starting to prove [the same]".

The women, though, are up there, with Coco Gauff leading the way. "The women's game hasn't had to deal with Federer, Novak, Rafa, Sinner and Alcaraz," Agassi said with a smile. "But they have their own version of it. Serena [Williams] is the Novak of the women's game and you have Coco who has got potential.

"The reason for American [men] not winning is an unfortunate set of decades where the guys (Federer, Nadal and Djokovic) were very stingy and greedy. I mean, 66 Grand Slams in the same generation! There's not a lot left there".

Can Nitish the bowler be the answer to India's balancing act in Tests?

IND MEN IN AUS

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
BRISBANE

Spring in the step: India will be a more dangerous side if Nitish the bowler comes to the fore. AP

Ever since Kapil Dev bowed out of the game after an ODI against the West Indies at Faridabad in 1994, India has been on a perennial search for the fast bowling all-rounder.

Early rival wickets and the insurance cover of runs down the order is a sought after trait in cricket. Kapil offered that and more, including safe hands and the 1983 World Cup!

Practical demands

Four decades since Kapil stepped aside, the quest for his replacement is now constricted by practical demands. The candidate should bowl at a reasonable speed, not necessarily express, and should score a few vital runs, not perhaps an unbeaten 175. Many cricketers were force-fitted into this toned-down requirement.

To be fair, Manoj Prabhakar was a strong contender, and at one time he opened the batting and bowling. Later, it was Ajit Agarkar's turn. And over the years, Irfan Pathan, Stuart Binny, Hardik Pandya and Shardul Thakur, to name a few, have all been seen through the prism of the Kapil lens.

Even if M.S. Dhoni, earlier, and Rishabh Pant now, give that all-round punch, both as wicket-keeper and marauding batter, the seam-bowling willow-wielder is very much part of the selectors' shopping list.

This demand for a player, who will lend balance, is again at play Down Under. Nitish Kumar seems to have answered the query for now and bowling coach Morne Morkel's words at Perth, seem prophetic: "He is one of the young guys who has got that sort of batting all-round ability. He (as a bowler) can hold one end up and he hits the bat a little bit harder than you think. It is a lovely opportunity for him to fill that all-rounder spot. He is a player you can keep your eye on in this series."

In the current Border-Gavaskar Trophy series, his maiden foray in Tests, Nitish has scored 163, averaging 54.33, and like Pant, has played shots that defy conventional field settings. The lofted drives straight down the ground or the scoops on either side behind the stumps have been from the top-drawer even if Pat Cummins nailed him on the ramp-shot at the Adelaide Oval where Australia pulled one back and levelled the series 1-1.

Nitish has also offered relief to mainstream speedsters by being the fourth seamer. He has the added bonus of two wickets. The 21-year-old is not a finished product and he will be a subject of intense scrutiny in rival camps with data being scoured and technical chinks analysed threadbare. These early days are often a surprise, and to replicate success when the opposition ranks have firmed up their plans will not be easy.

As the Indians landed in rain-swept Brisbane on Wednesday, Nitish, just like Washington Sundar, the spin all-rounder, are all part of the youth brigade, expected to flower. If Nitish gets his opportunities in the remaining three fixtures, starting with the third Test at the Gabba here from Saturday, and does well, it will surely leave Rohit Sharma's men in a happy space.

McSweeney growing in confidence

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
BRISBANE

McSweeney. GETTY IMAGES

Stepping into David Warner's shoes can be a daunting task and Nathan McSweeney is dealing with that onerous challenge in the current Border-Gavaskar Trophy series. Warner's buddy Usman Khawaja is his partner and matters get even more delicate as the former opener is now keeping a close eye as a commentator.

McSweeney, though, has Gabba, his home ground to lean on. Back in a familiar environment here on Wednesday, the opener respectfully dealt with Warner's shadow: "David was an unbelievable player with massive shoes to fill when he left. If I can be half the player he was, I am going alright." And then he added: "A Gabba ground I know really well, so hopefully I can spend some time out there and put Australia in a good position."

Drawing strength from the 67-run second-wicket partnership that he shared with Marnus Labuschagne during the second Test's first innings at the Adelaide Oval, McSweeney said: "Marnus made an unbelievable 64 in the context of the game. For us to come out and get through a tricky period was massive. Hopefully I can spend some more time out there with him. I got two good balls in Perth. I had some confidence to go to Adelaide and really trusted my game."

With a morning drizzle serenading Brisbane, the weather may get sticky but local boy McSweeney felt it was a false alarm: "Obviously a bit of a weather in the last few days, but it's a long way from the game (third Test). At the Gabba, it has great bounce, can seam around, and if there are overheads (clouds) it can swing around a bit. As a batter you prepare for all scenarios. It's definitely a new-ball wicket and if you can get past that, it's a lovely ground to bat at."

Irfan's goal proves the difference for CFC

Sweet: Irfan gave CFC its first home win of the season. M. VEDHAN

ISL

Joan Mathew Jacob
CHENNAI

Chennaiyin FC secured its first home win of the Indian Super League season after edging Hyderabad FC 1-0 at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here on Wednesday.

CFC opened the scoring in the fifth minute as Irfan Yadwad found the back of the net after running up to a beautifully weighted through ball from Lukas Brambilla.

HFC managed to slowly ease itself into the game, with Andrei Alba testing Mohammad Nawaz with a strike from distance.

The visitor's best chance came in the ensuing corner where Alba smashed the ball into the woodwork.

The match took an unfortunate pause, 10 minutes into the second half after substitute Elsinho collided with teammate P.C. Laldinpuia inside their own box. Both players stayed on the ground while the teammates urgently signalled for the medical staff. After receiving initial treatment, an ambulance was quickly called and Elsinho was transferred to it wearing a neck brace.

The Nawabs' efforts did not materialise into a goal despite a lively show. In the seventh minute of added time, Connor Shields was sent off after receiving a second yellow for time-wasting.

However, Irfan's early strike remained the point of difference.

The result: Chennaiyin FC 1 (Irfan 5) bt Hyderabad FC 0.

INBRIEF

Linde's exploits helps South Africa prevail over Pakistan

South Africa beat Pakistan by 11 runs in a thrilling T20I that went to the last over at Kingsmead. Set 184 to win, Pakistan was thwarted on 172 for eight. Mohammad Rizwan's steady but slow innings put pressure on his partners to swing hard.

The scores: South Africa 183/9 in 20 overs (Miller 82, Linde 48, Shaheen 3/22, Abrar 3/37) bt Pakistan 172/8 in 20 overs (Rizwan 74, Ayub 31, Linde 4/31).
Toss: South Africa; **PoM**: Linde.

West Indies wins ODI series against Bangladesh

West Indies beat Bangladesh by seven wickets to win the second ODI at Basseterre (St. Kitts and Nevis) on Tuesday and seal an ODI series against the Asian nation for the first time in 10 years.

The scores: Bangladesh 227 in 45.5 overs (Mahmudullah 62, Seales 4/22) lost to West Indies 230/3 in 36.5 overs (King 82, Lewis 49, Carty 45); **Toss:** WI; **PoM:** Seales.

LIVE TELECAST

Chess: World championship, FIDE YouTube channel, 2.30 p.m.

Conference League: Sony LIV, 6.30, 9, 11.15 p.m. & 1.30 a.m. (Friday)

West Indies vs Bangladesh: 3rd ODI, FanCode, 7 p.m.

ISL: Sports 18-3 & JioCinema, 7.30 p.m.

PKL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 8 p.m.

Europa League: Sony Sports Ten 1, 2, 3, 5 (SD & HD) & 11.15 p.m. & 1.30 a.m. (Friday)

Mumbai's batting comes to the fore against Vidarbha

Shaw and Rahane put on a show; Baroda eases past Bengal while Saurashtra downs Madhya Pradesh; Rawat's scintillating knock helps Delhi beat Uttar Pradesh

MUSHTAQ ALI TROPHY

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

Commendable: Baroda bowlers defended their 172 with ease. K. MURALI KUMAR

The might of the Mumbai batting line-up was on full display as the side outclassed Vidarbha by six wickets in the quarterfinal of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy at the Alur Cricket Stadium here on Wednesday.

Chasing a formidable 222, Mumbai got the perfect start as openers Prithvi Shaw (49, 26b, 5x4, 4x6) and Ajinkya Rahane (84, 45b, 10x4, 3x6) put on an 83-run stand in seven overs.

Rahane kept the score moving at a fast clip after Shaw returned to the hut. As the required rate started to climb, Shivam Dube (37 n.o., 22b, 1x4, 2x6) and Suryansh Shedge (36 n.o.,12b, 1x4, 4x6) got together for a match-winning unbroken fifth-wicket partnership.

Mumbai will take on Baroda in the first semifinal on Friday.

Baroda recorded a comfortable 41-run win over Bengal at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium.

Shashwat Rawat (40) and Abhimanyu Singh (37) took Baroda to a handy 172 for seven. Bengal's chase was derailed early, as left-arm pacer Lukman Meriwala scalped three wickets in the fourth over.

Shahbaz Ahmed (55, 36b, 3x4, 4x6) tried to keep Bengal in the hunt, but it was too little too late.

Bengal pacer Mohammed Shami had a lacklustre day, conceding 43 runs in his four overs.

Partial amends

Shami made partial amends by bowling zippy yorkers in the death, and picked up two wickets.

There was disappointment in store for fans of the Pandya brothers who turned up at the stadium, as Hardik and Krunal fell for 10 and seven respectively.

In another last-eight fixture, Anuj Rawat (73 n.o., 33b, 7x4, 5x6) came alive to power Delhi past Uttar Pradesh. Batting at four, Rawat feasted on short deliveries, swivelling neatly to loft the ball behind square.

In the second semifinal, Delhi will take on Madhya Pradesh, which dispatched Saurashtra by six wickets.

The scores:
At Alur grounds: Saurashtra 173/7 in 20 overs (Chirag Jani 80 n.o.) lost to Madhya Pradesh 174/4 in 19.2 overs (Arpit Gaud 42, Venkatesh Iyer 38 n.o., Rajat Patidar 28). **Toss:** Madhya Pradesh; **PoM:** Venkatesh Iyer.

Vidarbha 221/6 in 20 overs (Atharva Taide 66, Apoorv Wankhade 51, Shubham Dubey 43 n.o.) lost to Mumbai 224/4 in 19.2 overs (Prithvi Shaw 49, Ajinkya Rahane 84, Shivam Dube 37 n.o., Suryansh Shedge 36 n.o.). **Toss:** Mumbai; **PoM:** Ajinkya Rahane.

At M. Chinnaswamy Stadium: Baroda 172/7 in 20 overs (Shashwat Rawat 40, Abhimanyu Singh 37) bt Bengal 131 in 18 overs (Shahbaz Ahmed 55, Lukman Meriwala 3/17, Atit Sheth 3/41). **Toss:** Bengal, **PoM:** Lukman Meriwala.

Delhi 193/3 in 20 overs (Priyansh Arya 44, Yash Dhull 42, Anuj Rawat 73 n.o.) bt Uttar Pradesh 174 in 20 overs (Priyam Garg 54, Prince Yadav 3/36). **Toss:** Uttar Pradesh; **PoM:** Anuj Rawat.

Top seeds Sathiyan & Baishya crash out

TABLE TENNIS

Sports Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Top seeds G. Sathiyan (PSPB) and Baishya Poymantee (RSPB) lost in the pre-quarterfinals of the UTT National Ranking Table Tennis tournament at the Jimmy George indoor stadium here on Wednesday.

The 10th-ranked Akash Pal (RSPB) upset Sathiyan 13-11, 8-11, 11-9, 11-9, 11-8, while Jennifer Varghese (Maharashtra), ranked 14th, shocked Baishya 11-4, 14-16, 11-8, 11-7.

The results: Men:
Pre-quarterfinals: Akash Pal (RSPB) bt G. Sathiyan (PSPB) 13-11, 8-11, 11-9, 11-8; P.B. Abhinand (TN) bt Sarthak Gandhi (Har) 11-8, 11-3, 11-6; Divyansh Srivastava (UP) bt Punit Biswas (Ben) 8-11, 11-9, 11-2, 2-11, 11-4; Ankur Bhattacharjee (PSPB) bt Sudhanshu Grover (Del) 8-11, 10-12, 11-9, 13-11, 11-5; Manush Shah (RBI) bt Jash Modi (Mah) 11-6, 11-6, 11-9; Yashansh Malik (AAI) bt Deepit R. Patil (AAI) 11-6, 9-11, 11-3, 11-7; S.F.R. Snehit (IA&AD) bt Payas Jain (Del) 11-9, 11-6, 9-11, 11-4; Manav Thakkar (PSPB) bt Anthony Amalraj (PSPB) 11-8, 11-8, 11-3.

Women: Quarterfinals: Taneesha Kotecha (Mah) bt Jennifer Varghese (Mah) 8-11, 11-9, 11-6, 11-5; Swastika Gosh (AAI) bt Pritha Vartikar (Mah) 11-6, 11-6, 11-6; Diya Parag Chitale (RBI) bt Syndrela Das (Ben) 12-10, 8-11, 11-9, 11-5.

Pre-quarterfinals: Jennifer bt Baishya Poymantee (RSPB) 11-4, 14-16, 11-8, 11-7; Taneesha bt Reeth Rishya (PSPB) 13-11, 9-11, 11-9, 11-5; Pritha bt Moumita Dutta (RSPB) 11-4, 11-4, 12-10; Swastika bt Suhana Saini (Har) 11-8, 11-13, 11-9, 11-5; Syndrela bt Yashaswini Ghorpade (PSPB) 6-11, 11-9, 9-11, 11-8, 11-7; Diya bt Avisha Krmakar (Ben) 11-6, 11-2, 11-8.

Under-19: Quarterfinals: Boys: Punit bt Umesh Kumar (TN) 11-8, 5-11, 8-11, 11-5, 11-8; Priyanuj Bhattacharyya (Asm) bt Preyesh Raj (TN) 13-15, 11-7, 11-8, 11-4; Kushal Chopda (Mah) bt P.B. Abhinand (TN) 11-8, 5-11, 11-9, 7-11, 11-7.

Girls: Pritha bt Nandini Saha (Ben) 11-9, 11-8, 5-11, 11-7; Syndrela bt Suhana 11-5, 11-9, 11-8; Ananya Muralidharan (TN) bt Diya Brahmachary (Del) 11-5, 11-9, 11-7; Ananya Chande (Mah) bt Taneesha 11-9, 11-6, 11-9.

Smriti wages lone battle as Australia sweeps series

IND WOM IN AUS

Press Trust of India
PERTH

Opener Smriti Mandhana's elegant century went in vain as India lost to Australia by 83 runs in the third Women's ODI to suffer a 0-3 series whitewash here on Wednesday.

Opting to field, India had Australia on the ropes at 78 for four before Annabel Sutherland's scintillating 95-ball 110, and brisk half-centuries from Ashleigh Gardner (50) and skipper Tahlia McGrath (56 n.o.), lifted the host to a competitive 298 for six at the WACA. In reply, India was bowled out for 215 in 45.1 overs.

The stylish Smriti anchored the innings beautifully during her 105 off 109 balls.

The problem with the Indian innings was that the senior batter lacked support from the others after Alana King ended a 118-run partnership between Smriti and Harleen Deol by dismissing the latter.

Spin-bowling all-rounder Gardner completed a fine match by taking five wickets for 30 runs after her contribution with the willow.

Earlier, Australia survived a stellar spell from India pacer Arundhati Reddy to post a challenging total.

Sutherland led Australia's recovery after Arundhati struck four times in quick succession for career-best figures in limited-overs cricket.

Arundhati got the ball to swing back from a fuller length which led to the fall of last match's centurion Voll, who saw her stumps disturbed.

Phoebe Litchfield was caught behind chasing an away swinger and all the momentum gained by Australia was suddenly lost.

Next to depart was Elysse Perry who had no answer to a beauty from Arundhati that held its line to hit the top of off-stump. When Beth Mooney departed, Australia was reduced to 78 for four.

Sutherland and Gardner then shared a 96-run stand for the fifth wicket.

McGrath joined Sutherland in the 35th over and the duo pushed the score towards 300. Sutherland got to her hundred by dispatching Deepti for a six over mid-wicket in the final over and set the table for another Australian victory.

The scores: Australia 298/6 in 50 overs (Sutherland 110, Gardner 50, McGrath 56 n.o., Arundhati 4/26) bt India 215 in 45.1 overs (Smriti 105, Harleen 39, Gardner 5/30); **Toss:** India; **PoM & PoS:** Sutherland.

Clutch performance: Sutherland's timely century got Australia out of trouble. GETTY IMAGES

Indian men, women enter quarterfinals

SQUASH

Sports Bureau

India entered the quarterfinals of the men's and women's sections of the WSF World team squash championships in Hong Kong on Wednesday. Indian men upset fifth-seeded Malaysia 2-1 while the women defeated Australia 2-1.

In the quarterfinals on Thursday, India will meet France, the third seed, in the men's section and second seed USA in the women's.

Salah keeps Liverpool perfect, vital wins for Real and PSG

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

Mohamed Salah helped maintain Liverpool's perfect record in the Champions League on Tuesday while holder Real Madrid bounced back from its defeat at Anfield to topple inform Italians Atalanta.

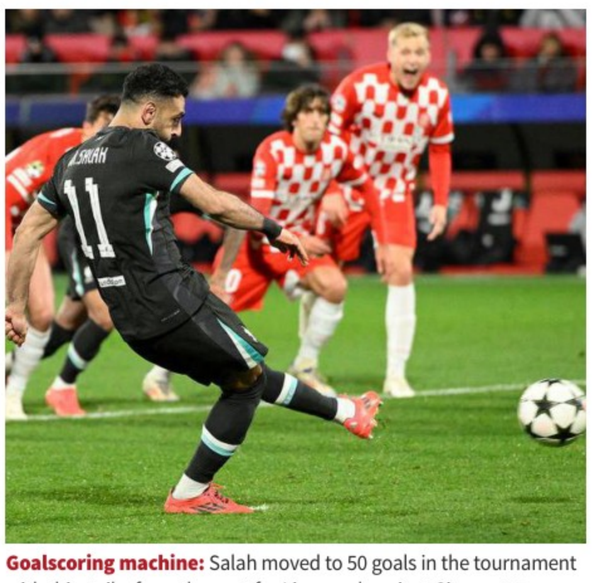
Elsewhere, struggling Paris Saint-Germain gained a vital win at Salzburg, while Bayer Leverkusen edged Inter Milan to move second.

Aston Villa, in its first appearance in the continent's elite club competition for 41 years, maintained its bright progress beating Leipzig 3-2 to sit third.

Decisive

In Spain, Salah's 63rd-minute penalty proved decisive against dogged debutants Girona.

Under new coach Arne Slot Liverpool is virtually assured a place in the last 16.



Goalscoring machine: Salah moved to 50 goals in the tournament with this strike from the spot for Liverpool against Girona. AFP

Salah sent Paulo Gazzaniga the wrong way to net his 50th Champions League goal, pulling the Egyptian level with Filippo Inzaghi as the 10th highest goalscorer of all-time in the competition.

Kylian Mbappe gave Real a 10th minute lead before hobbling off injured in Atalanta, his strike was cancelled out by Charles de Ketelaere's penalty in first-half additional time.

Vinicius Junior had Real back on top before the hour, with Jude Bellingham also on the scoresheet for a 3-2 win over the Serie a leader.

PSG put the wheels back on its stuttering campaign with a much needed 3-0 win on the road at Salzburg.

Bayern swept aside Ukraine side Shakhtar Donetsk in Gelsenkirchen 5-1. Fellow Bundesliga giant Leverkusen became the first team to score against Inter in this year's competition in a 1-0 win that lifted it five points adrift of Liverpool at the top of the league.

The results:

Dinamo Zagreb 0 drew with Celtic 0; Girona 0 lost to Liverpool 1 (Salah 63-pen); RB Leipzig 2 (Openda 27, Baumgartner 62) lost to Aston Villa 3 (McGinn 3, Duran 52, Barkley 85); Shakhtar Donetsk 1 (Kevin 5) lost to Bayern Munich 5 (Laimer 11, Muller 45, Olise 70-pen, 90+3, Musiala 87); Atalanta 2 (De Ketelaere 45-pen, Lookman 65) lost to Real Madrid 3 (Mbappe 10, Vinicius Jr. 56, Bellingham 59); Club Bruges 2 (Quaresma 24-og, Nielsen 84) bt Sporting 1 (Catamo 3); RB Salzburg 0 lost to PSG 3 (Goncalo Ramos 30, Nuno Mendes 72, Doue 85); Brest 1 (Le Cardinal 43) bt PSV Eindhoven 0; Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Mukiele 90) bt Inter Milan 0.

KARNATAKA ROUND-UP

Diya knocks out Jahnavi in last eight

BENGALURU: Diya Ravikumar Janaki scored a shock win over top-seeded Jahnavi Tammineedi in the girls' quarterfinals of the KSLTA-Asian junior (u-14) tournament at the KSLTA Tennis Stadium courts on Wednesday.

The eighth-seeded Diya's lopsided 6-3, 6-1 win helped set up a semifinal showdown with fourth seed Niesha Enja, who scored a comfortable 6-2, 6-2 win over American Mithravinda Sathish in another quarterfinal.

In the boys' section, qualifier Kian Patel scored a come-from-behind win over third-seeded Sanjay Girish Kumar in the quarterfinals.

The results (quarterfinals):
Boys: Arjun Manikandan bt Rithish Abinav 6-3, 6-2; Kian Patel bt Sanjay Girish Kumar 4-6, 6-1, 6-0; Aarav Chhallani bt Madhav Dadhich 7-5, 6-2; Aarav Mulay bt Adarsh Dileepkumar 3-6, 6-3, 6-2.
Girls: Diya Ravikumar Janaki bt Jahnavi Tammineedi 6-3, 6-1; Padmapriya Ramesh Kumar bt Parinitha Kutti Vattaprambil 7-6 (7-2), 6-2; Krishika Gautam bt Ayessha Bagla 6-1, 5-7, 6-0; Niesha Enja bt Mithravinda Sathish (USA) 6-2, 6-2.

Kian Patel SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Pavan and Rishav win it for RVCE

Half-centuries from Pavan (51 n.o.) and Rishav (56) helped RVCE record a thumping nine-wicket win over NMIT in the MS Ramaiah Memorial State-level inter-engineering college cricket tournament on Wednesday.

The scores: MSRIT (B) 179/5 in 28 overs (Shricharan 48 n.o., Amit 43) bt 153 in 24.3 overs (Rohan 62, Sidvin 3/32).
NMIT 129 in 28.1 overs (Vinay Kumar 35, Abhiram 3/12) lost to RVCE 132/1 in 15.2 overs (Pavan 51 n.o., Rishav 56).

U-23 women's State cricket team trials

Open selection trials for U-23 women's Karnataka team will be held on December 18 (9 a.m. onwards) at the KSCA-B ground, Chinnaswamy Stadium. Those interested should report at 8 a.m. in cricketing attire with a copy of their date-of-birth certificate. Only those born on or after September 1, 2001 are eligible.

Nitish Arya sizzles

Nitish Arya's all-round effort (39 & 4/6) helped Swastic Union (1) defeat Gandhinagar Cricketers by 96 runs in the pre-quarterfinals of the KSCA (Group I) under-14 inter-club tournament.

The scores: Swastic Union (1) 132 in 40.3 overs (Nitish Arya 39, R. Rohith Reddy 25, Tanish Bennuri 3/11) bt Gandhinagar Cricketers 36 in 17 overs (Vedanth Vedanarayanan 3/9, Nitish Arya 4/6).

Bangalore SC 305/6 in 50 overs (Pavandeep R. Bharadakane 63, Vikram 152) bt City Gymkhana 139 in 37.1 overs (M. Jashwanth 35, H.S. Siddharth 28, M. Tarun 27, Krishna 5/27).

Minerva 85 in 43 overs (M. Neeraj 3/22) lost to Rajajinagar Cricketers 86/1 in 24 overs (Niranjan Ashok 35 n.o.).

FUCC (1) 145 in 44.4 overs (S.N. Avaneesha 75, P. Girish Kumar 27, Siddharth Kona 3/35) bt Hammonds 103 in 45.2 overs (Sangeeta Rao Sashang 32, Niyanta Santosh Kulkarni 3/28).

Vultures 288/3 in 50 overs (Arnav N. Manchale 93, Anirudh M. Bangera 102, Bryan Thomas 49 n.o.) bt Wadiyar 200 in 47.3 overs (B.K. Samarth 25, K. Yeshwanth 59, P.J. Vishist 3/24, Saurjyesh Das 4/40).

Karnataka Youth CA, Malur 132/8 in 50 overs (Ryan Tomar 59 n.o.) lost to Vijaya 134/7 in 37 overs (Yuvaan Porwal 43, R.K. Shwetansh 4/35).

Sangam CA 154 in 40.5 overs (Raunak 41, M. Tanshh Krishna 3/14) lost to Social Cricketers 155/5 in 44.5 overs (Rafa Poonacha Ballachanda 63 n.o.).

Swastic Union CC (2) 143 in 49 overs (Hannan Zaki Ahmad 29, M. Daiwik 44, Jaipreeth 5/27) bt RVCE Gymkhana 85 in 39.1 overs (Vivek Seervi 3/17, Hannan Zaki Ahmad 4/16).